

Presseinformation, Mai 2021

Ausstellung im Strauhof, Augustinergasse 9, Zürich

Wild Card 12 Hannes Schüpbach und Stephen Watts Explosion der Wörter 9. – 20. Juni 2021

Ein zentrales Thema des Schweizer Künstlers Hannes Schüpbach sind die Momente, aus denen Kunst entsteht. Für «Explosion der Wörter» hat er mit dem Londoner Dichter und Sprachaktivisten Stephen Watts zusammengearbeitet.

Mit «Explosion der Wörter», einer «kinematographischen Fotoinstallation», die sich friesartig über 24 Meter ausdehnt und in die «Textexplosionen» aus Gedichten von Stephen Watts eingefügt sind, antwortet Hannes Schüpbach auf dessen gelebte Räume zwischen ausufernder Forschung über Dichtung, Tätigkeit als Übersetzer und dem Schreiben eigener, bestürzend unmittelbarer Texte.

Stephen Watts (*1952) hat zahlreiche Gedichtbände, Anthologien und Übersetzungen publiziert. Seit 40 Jahren arbeitet er ausserdem an einer Bibliografie der weltweiten Dichtung des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts in englischer Übersetzung. Gegen 1500 Buchseiten der ersten Papierausgabe dieses Werks, das Schüpbach in drei mehrbändigen Exemplaren zur Ausstellung herausgibt, werden als Teil der raumumspannenden Installation direkt auf die Wände des Museum Strauhof aufgezogen, entsprechend einem Kosmos der Weltpoesie. Mit der riesigen imaginären Bibliothek rückt eine Vielfalt der Dichtung in den Blick, wie sie unter den Vorzeichen unterschiedlichster Kulturen, Umgebungen und historischer Vorgänge an Orten auf der ganzen Welt geschrieben und gesprochen wurde und wird. Als immenser «Sprachspeicher» erinnert sie an die erneuernde Kraft des Austauschs, die im Übersetzen liegt. Mit seinen fotografischen Blicken, die als gerahmte Bilder in einem sprachähnlichen Auf und Ab rhythmisch über diesen Hintergrund hinweg laufen, präsentiert Hannes Schüpbach in «Explosion der Wörter» eine Vision von Lebensort und Dichtung, Dichtung und Welt, wie sie der nomadische Künstler und Gelehrte Stephen Watts exemplarisch und auf höchst eigenwillige Art und Weise verkörpert.

In weiteren Räumen der Ausstellung sind eine ursprünglich von Schüpbach als Performance konzipierte Folge poetischer Piktogramme auf Tellern (*Sequenz*, 1996) und eine Auswahl der *Drawn Poems* aus Notizbüchern von Stephen Watts zu sehen.

Die Ausstellung wird von Januar bis April 2022 ebenfalls in der Nunnery Gallery von Bow Arts in London gezeigt. Ein zweibändiges (und zweisprachiges) Künstlerbuch ist im Verlag für moderne Kunst, Wien erschienen. Für den zweiten Band (Gedichte engl./dt.) hat Hannes Schüpbach erstmals die Übersetzung in seine Praxis als bildender Künstler integriert: «Übersetzen ist wie die Montage eines Films, entlang eines anderen Films».

Ort: Strauhof, Augustinergasse 9, 8001 Zürich, 044 221 93 51

Ausstellungsdaten: 9. – 20. Juni 2021

Eröffnungsnachmittag: Mi, 9. Juni, 15–19 Uhr

Öffnungszeiten: Di bis Fr 12–18 Uhr | Do 12–22 Uhr | Sa und So 11–17 Uhr

Webseite: www.strauhof.ch/ausstellungen/explosion

Beteiligte:

Stephen Watts (London *1952) hat zahlreiche Gedichtbände, Anthologien und Übersetzungen publiziert. Zuletzt erschienen «Ancient Sunlight» (London 2014) und «Republic of Dogs/Republic of Birds» (London 2016; Neuauflage 2021). Seit 40 Jahren arbeitet er an einer fortlaufenden Bibliografie der weltweiten Dichtung des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts in englischer Übersetzung, die im Strauhof erstmals integral präsentiert wird. Er war mit dem Schriftsteller W. G. Sebald befreundet, mit dem er das Interesse an den kulturellen Schichten Europas und East Londons teilt.

Hannes Schüpbach (Winterthur *1965) ist bildender Künstler. In den 1990er Jahren wurde er zuerst mit seinen raumfüllenden, in der Bewegung erlebbaren Malerei-Suiten bekannt. Sein neueres Werk umfasst vor allem Filme in 16mm ohne Ton. Im Film «Essais» (2020, 43 Min.) ist Stephen Watts eine der sieben unterschiedlichen Figuren, die mit einer Bewegung aus sich selbst befasst sind. Eines von Hannes Schüpbachs zentralen Themen sind die Momente aus denen Kunst entsteht. Für das Projekt mit Stephen Watts hat er sich ausserdem erstmals dem literarischen Übersetzen gewidmet. Übersichtsausstellung «Hannes Schüpbach – Stills and Movies» in der Kunsthalle Basel, 2009. Präsentationen und Ausstellungen der Filme fanden statt in Institutionen wie dem Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Harvard Film Archive, Cambridge, Tate Modern, London (2009); Centre Pompidou, Paris, Kunsthalle Wien, LUX/ICA Biennale of Moving Images, London, Kunstmuseum Winterthur (2012); Arsenal, Berlin, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago (Reihe «Conversations at the Edge», SAIC), Whitechapel Gallery, London (2013); International Film Festival Rotterdam (2014); Fri Art Kunsthalle Fribourg (2015); CCCB Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (2016); Cineteca Nazionale, Rom, Stadtprojektionen, St. Gallen, Filmpodium, Zürich (2017); Medrar for Contemporary Art, Kairo, Filmoteca de Galicia (2018).

Jo Catling lehrte ab 1993 an der University of East Anglia in Norwich, wo sie bis zu seinem frühen Tod mit W. G. Sebald zusammenarbeitete. Sie hat mehrfach zu Rilke, dem Übersetzen und zu W. G. Sebald publiziert, dessen Essays zur Literatur sie ins Englische übersetzt. Sie hat für die Publikation den Textbeitrag «The Spaces Between/Im Zwischenraum» verfasst, in dem sie Bedeutungsschichten aufspürt, die sich zwischen Bild- und Textelementen der raumumspannenden Installation «Explosion der Wörter» eröffnen.

Publikation

«Hannes Schüpbach / Stephen Watts: Explosion of Words / Explosion der Wörter» (zweiteiliges Künstlerbuch).

Herausgeber: Hannes Schüpbach.

Texte: Stephen Watts, Hannes Schüpbach, Jo Catling.

Gestaltung: Raphael Drechsel, Great Design, Wien.

Format: Englisch/Deutsch, 2 broschiierte Bände, 26 x 19,5 cm, insgesamt 192 Seiten, 33 Abbildungen.

Verkaufspreis in der Ausstellung: CHF 36.00.

ISBN 978-3-903796-50-8.

Verlag für moderne Kunst, Wien (www.vfmk.org).

Erscheinungsdatum: Januar 2021.

Veranstaltungen

Reservation über die jeweilige Webseite.

– Fr, 11. Juni, 19 Uhr, Strauhof, Zürich: Lesung von Stephen Watts und Gespräch zum Blick des Gedichts und dem Blick auf Dichtung zusammen mit Hannes Schüpbach und Jo Catling (Englisch, teilweise mit deutscher Übersetzung).

– Mi, 16. Juni, 19.30 Uhr, Villa Sträuli, Winterthur, Lesung von Stephen Watts, Gespräch mit Hannes Schüpbach und Jo Catling (en/de).

– Fr, 18. Juni, 18 Uhr, Filmpodium, Zürich, Premiere des Films «Essais» von Hannes Schüpbach, in dem unter anderen Stephen Watts kurz vorkommt. Anschliessend spricht der Philosoph Jürg Berthold mit Hannes Schüpbach.

Strauhof: Literaturmuseum und «Wild Cards»

Der «Strauhof» in Zürich verbindet Literatur und deren räumliche Inszenierung. Er ist ein Ort für die Wirklichkeit der Literatur und ihre Räume der Imagination, über Sprachen und Grenzen hinweg. – Die kürzeren Ausstellungen unter der Bezeichnung «Wild Card» beleuchten Literatur als Gradmesser, Motor und Impulsgeber einer vielschichtigen Gesellschaft und beschäftigen sich sowohl mit historischen wie aktuellen Prozessen, auch über das Feld der Literatur hinaus. www.strauhof.ch.

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Kontakt Hannes Schüpbach

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Grosszügige Unterstützung gewährten:

Madeleine und Albert Erlanger-Wyler-Stiftung; Georg und Bertha Schwyzer-Winiker Stiftung; Stanley Thomas Johnson Stiftung; Ernst und Olga Gubler-Hablützel Stiftung; Dr. Adolf Streuli-Stiftung; Stadt Zürich Kultur; Stadt Winterthur; Georges und Jenny Bloch-Stiftung; Pro Helvetia, Schweizer Kulturstiftung; Volkart Stiftung; Fondation Jan Michalski; Swiss Cultural Fund UK.

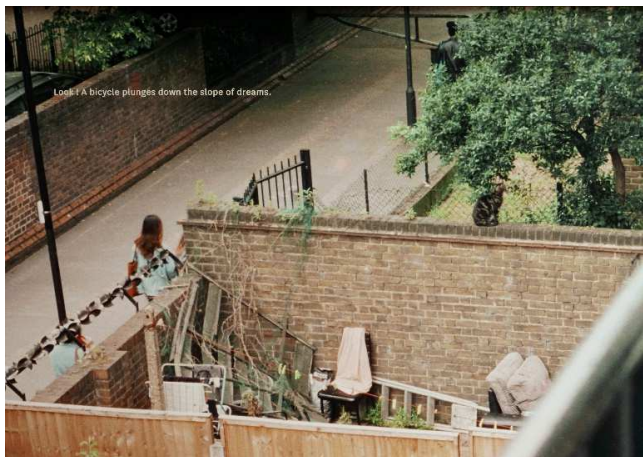
Pressebilder «Explosion der Wörter»:



<01_Explosion der
Woerter_Stephen
Watts_Bibliography>
Wandtapezierung aus Buchseiten
von Stephen Watts, «A Biblio-
graphy Of Modern Poetry In
English Translation. A Work In
Progress», 2021.
© Hannes Schüpbach / Stephen
Watts für die Bibliografie



<02_Explosion der Woerter_Hannes Schuepbach
Teil 2>
Hannes Schüpbach: «Explosion der Wörter», 2020
(Teil 2 von 24; Fotografie, mit Textfragment von
Stephen Watts).
Für Querformat kann Ausschnitt gewählt werden.
© Hannes Schüpbach / Stephen Watts für den
Textausschnitt



<03_Explosion der Woerter_Hannes
Schuepbach Teil 8>
Hannes Schüpbach: «Explosion der
Wörter», 2020 (Teil 8 von 24;
Fotografie, mit Textfragment von
Stephen Watts).
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Watts für den Textausschnitt

**Hoch aufgelöste Dateien bitte bei <info@strauhof.ch> oder
<hs.schuepbach@gmail.com> anfordern.**

Ab hier folgt zusätzliches Material zur

Wild Card 12:
Hannes Schüpbach &
Stephen Watts
Explosion der Wörter

im Strauhof, Zürich, 9. – 20. Juni 2021

— Angaben zu Stephen Watts: *A Bibliography*

— Angaben zur Publikation im VfmK, Wien

Anhang 1

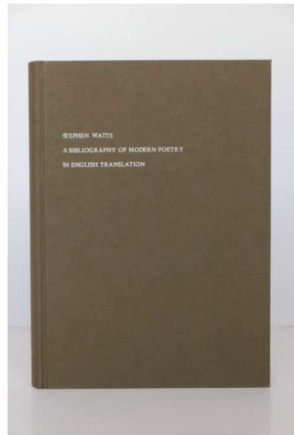
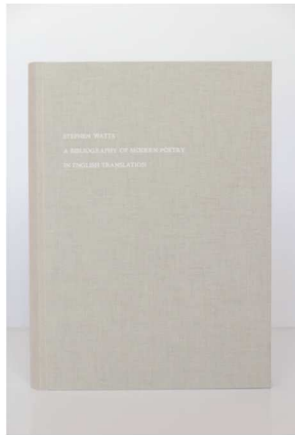
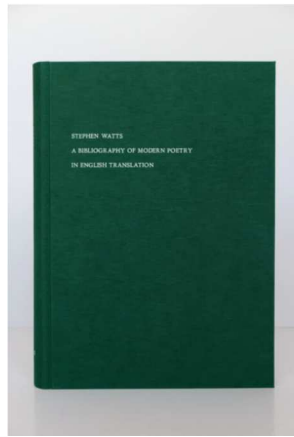
Gespräch zwischen Stephen Watts und Hannes Schüpbach zur *Bibliography*

Anhang 2

Seiten aus der Publikation:

Sequenz von 24 Fotografien

Gedichte mit deutschen Übersetzungen

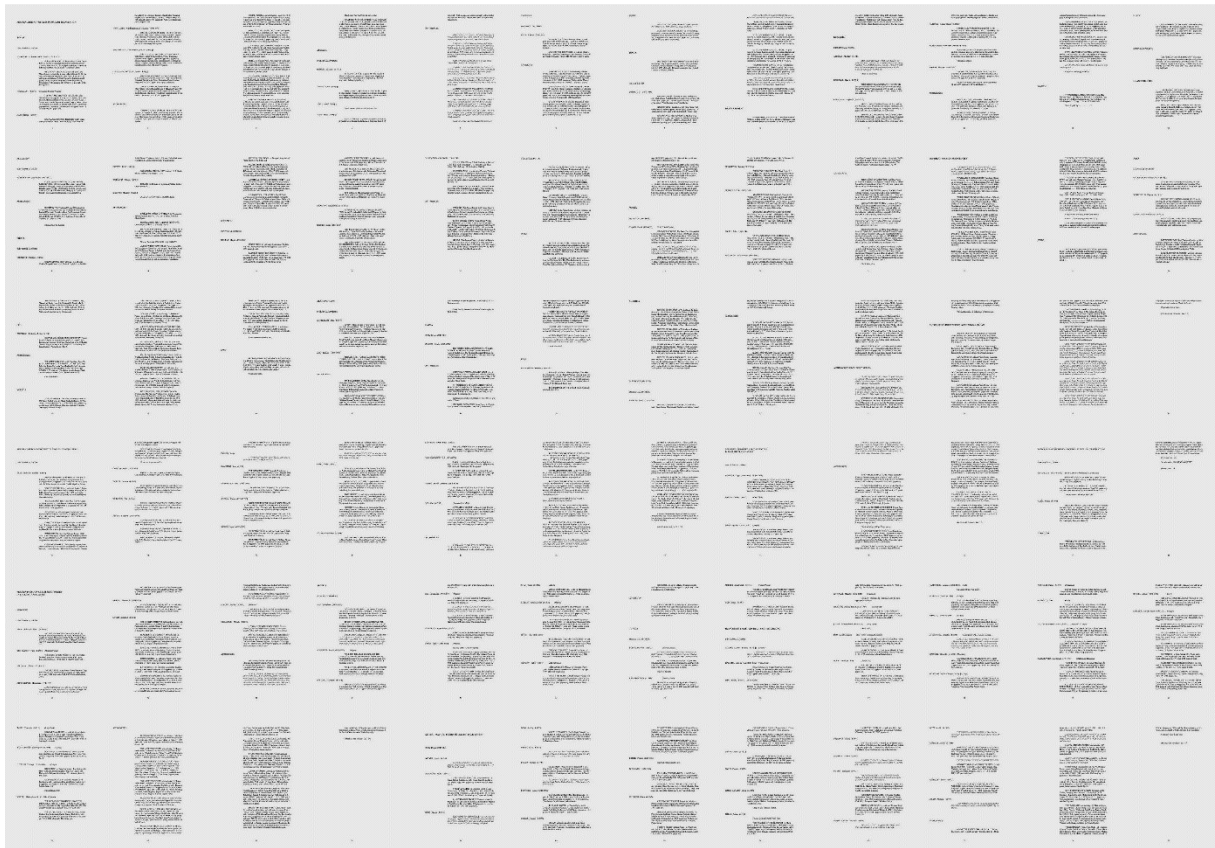


Stephen Watts A Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation. A Work In Progress, Vols. I–IV

Since 1980 the London-based poet, translator and language activist Stephen Watts has worked on a worldwide bibliography of C20th and C21st poetry in English translation. A limited prototype first edition, including titles published up to 2019, celebrates his work of now 40 years as part of exhibitions in Zurich and London.

A bibliography holds within itself an imagined library, a place where translation is a vital art. — Stephen Watts

2021 prototype edition, totally 1968 pages, four clothbound volumes, 30 x 22 x 4.5 cm each.
Published without an ISBN number.
Vol. I — 488 pp.; Vol. II — 484 pp.; Vol. III — 508 pp.; Vol. IV — 488 pp.
Edition of 3. Date of publication: January 2021



I started the bibliography precisely because I was a poet and because, if you want, of my vision of what poetry is and poetries are and can do.

There is a rich history to be written of multilingual readings even just in London : readings in Yiddish, in Urdu, in Punjabi, in Bengali, in Turkish, in Kurdish, in various Spanishes, in Basque & in Catalan, in Armenian & Georgian & Farsi, in Polish & Greek. But isn't this what living in London and writing poetry in English is all about ?

The final words of my book 'Republic Of Dogs/Republic Of Birds' are '(Unwritten. Mislaid. Or Lost)'. Much of our lives are ! Perhaps the work of this *Bibliography*, as an effort of cultural activism, is in part an attempt to make sure that these translations are not 'unwritten, mislaid, or lost'.

— Stephen Watts (in 'Stephen Watts in Conversation with Hannes Schüpbach', *A Bibliography*, Vol. I, pp. v–xix)



The present first edition of Stephen Watts' *A Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation* comprises three copies each in four clothbound volumes plus pages printed on loose sheets for the exhibitions

Hannes Schüpbach & Stephen Watts: Explosion der Wörter
at Strauhof, Zurich, 9 – 20 June 2021
and *Hannes Schüpbach & Stephen Watts: Explosion of Words*
at Nunnery Gallery, Bow Arts, London, January – April 2022

Edited and book design by Hannes Schüpbach, based on
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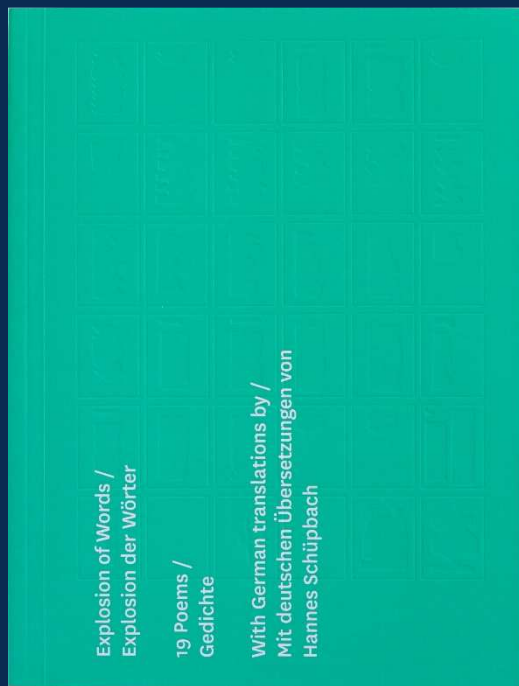
This bibliography was researched, compiled and shaped by Stephen Watts and this first edition was conceived and assembled at the instigation of Hannes Schüpbach with the author

Stephen Watts

was born in London in 1952 (of partly Swiss-Italian heritage), where he still lives and works in Whitechapel. He has published seven books of poetry – *The Lava's Curl* (Grimaldi Press, 1990), *Gramsci & Caruso* (Periplum, 2004, with Czech translation by Petr Mikeš, reissued by Mille Gru, 2014, with Italian translation by Cristina Viti), *The Blue Bag* (Aark Arts, 2004), *Mountain Language / Lingua di montagna* (2008) and *Journey Across Breath / Tragitto nel respiro* (2011, both: Hearing Eye, with Italian translations by Cristina Viti), *Ancient Sunlight* (Enitharmon, 2014, repr. 2020), and *Republic of Dogs / Republic of Birds* (Test Centre, 2016; new edition, Prototype, 2020) – and edited several anthologies – *Houses & Fish. A book of drawings with writing by 4 & 5 year olds* (Parrot Press, 1991), *Voices of Conscience* (an international anthology of censored poets, Iron Press, 1995), *Mother Tongues* (a special issue of *Modern Poetry in Translation*, 2001), and *Music While Drowning* (an anthology of German Expressionist poems that accompanied an exhibition at the Tate Modern in London, Tate Publishing, 2003). His numerous translations and co-translations include books of modern Kurdish, Georgian and British Bangladeshi Poetry as well as volumes by A.N. Stencl, Meta Kušar, Amarjit Chandan, Adnan al-Sayegh, Golan Haji and Ziba Karbassi (from Yiddish, Slovenian, Punjabi, Arabic, Persian). He has also curated bilingual readings at several exhibitions (including Emil Nolde, Joan Miró, Arshile Gorky, Renato Guttuso and Francisco Toledo). He has worked in schools and hospitals as a writer on issues of well-being and creativity. *The Republics*, a film directed by Huw Wahl and based on Stephen Watts' book *Republic Of Dogs / Republic Of Birds* has been premiered in 2020. Since 1980 Stephen Watts has compiled an ongoing *Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation*.

Hannes Schüpbach & Stephen Watts: *Explosion of Words / Explosion der Wörter*

Publikation im
Verlag für moderne Kunst, Wien



Hannes Schüpbach & Stephen Watts Explosion of Words / Explosion der Wörter

Die zweiteilige Publikation umfasst

Hannes Schüpbach: Explosion of Words / Explosion der Wörter. Gewidmet Stephen Watts. Mit einem Textbeitrag von Jo Catling

Stephen Watts: Explosion of Words / Explosion der Wörter. 19 Gedichte.
Mit deutschen Übersetzungen von Hannes Schüpbach

Ein zentrales Thema des Schweizer Künstlers Hannes Schüpbach sind die Momente, aus denen Kunst entsteht. Mit seinem neusten Werk, "Explosion der Wörter", einer *kinematographischen Fotoinstallation*, die sich friesartig über 24 Meter ausdehnt, antwortet er auf den Existenzraum des in London lebenden Dichters und Sprachaktivisten Stephen Watts zwischen ausufernder Forschung über Dichtung und eigenen Beiträgen als Dichter zur "Explosion der Wörter". Als Teil dieses Projekts hat Hannes Schüpbach eine Auswahl von Stephen Watts' Gedichten ins Deutsche übersetzt.

Begleitet Ausstellungen im Strauhof (Zürich) und in der Nunnery Gallery, Bow Arts (London) im 2021 und 2022.

EDITOR Hannes Schüpbach

TEXTS Stephen Watts, Hannes Schüpbach, Jo Catling

DESIGN Raphael Drechsel, Great Design, Vienna

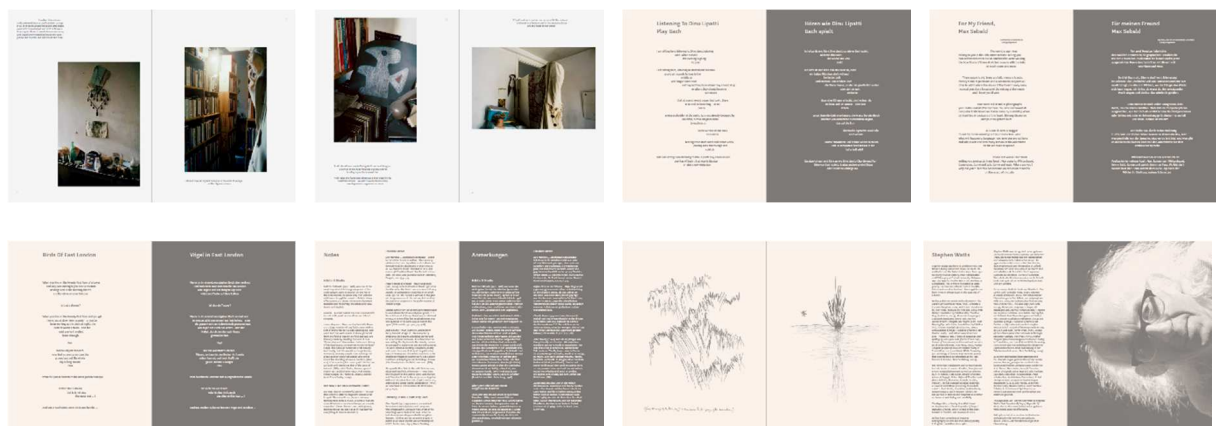
DETAILS English/German, 2 volumes, 192 pages in total, 26 x 19.5 cm, 33 ills. in colour and b/w

EURO 32.00

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With an essay by / Mit einem Textbeitrag von Jo Catling: The Spaces Between / Im Zwischenraum

An 'Explosion of Words' – a dynamic, centrifugal process arising from an intense emotional encounter, a release from the centre to the remotest edges of the landscape of the imagination, echoing the wildest landscape of our souls. A landscape opened up through dream, through imagination, through poetry, through images. The photograph – or is it the poem? – as 'spoken image'¹; a frozen moment or still point, an island in the ocean of words. Within these image islands, refracted, hovering, the islands of poetry – 'text clouds', or 'text explosions' as the artist calls them – still shimmering, not quite fixed, quotations within quotations radiating outwards and back to the poem, the centre, the unfixed point from which we move through Hannes Schüpbach's frieze of photographs, and his selection of poems from *Ancient Sunlight*, increasingly conscious of the spaces between images, between image and text, text and translation. [...]

While there is no direct connection between the artist Hannes Schüpbach and Sebald, the latter is one of many *absences présentes* here, hovering behind or above the coincidences and constellations surrounding this project [...]. As Stephen Watts relates in his 'Reminiscence' of Max Sebald (the name by which friends and colleagues invariably knew him) it was Sebald's offer of a bursary at BCLT that first brought him to Norwich to work on that monumental labour of love, the 'bibliography of twentieth-century poetry in English translation'² (*A Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation* in the exhibition), the fruits of which here form the text-ocean upon which the photographs float as islands, with the hovering 'text clouds', or perhaps 'ice-floes of speech'³ of the quoted poems forming word-islands within them.

Eine «Explosion der Wörter» – ein dynamischer, zentrifugaler Vorgang, ausgelöst durch eine heftige Gefühlserschütterung, eine Entladung aus dem Zentrum zu den fernsten Rändern der Landschaften unserer Imagination, entsprungen dem wildesten Gebiet unserer Seele. Landschaften, die sich öffnen durch den Traum, die Vorstellungskraft, durch Dichtung und durch Bilder. Die Fotografie – oder das Gedicht? – als «gesprochenes Bild»¹, ein eingefrorener Augenblick oder Ruhepunkt, eine Insel im Meer der Wörter. In den inselartigen Bildern finden sich, gebrochen, schwebend, Inseln der Dichtung – der Künstler nennt sie «Textwolken» oder «Textexplosionen» – schimmernd, noch nicht ganz feststehend, Zitate in Zitaten, die zugleich nach aussen und zurück ins Gedicht führen, dem Zentrum und nie festzumachenden, ausstrahlenden Punkt, von dem aus wir uns durch den «Fries» der Fotografien von Hannes Schüpbach bewegen und entlang seiner Auswahl von Gedichten aus *Ancient Sunlight*, mit offenen Augen für die Räume zwischen den Bildern, zwischen Bild und Text, Text und Übersetzung. [...]

Obwohl es keine direkte Verbindung zwischen dem Künstler Hannes Schüpbach und W. G. Sebald gibt, gehört der Letztere doch zu den anwesenden Abwesenden und ist im Hintergrund durch einige Zufälle und Konstellationen mit diesem Projekt verbunden [...]. Wie Stephen Watts in seiner «Reminiscence» an Max Sebald (so nannten ihn ausnahmslos alle Freunde und Kollegen) berichtet, brachte ihn Sebalds Zusage für ein Stipendium des BCLT nach Norwich, wo er an seiner aus Liebe zur Sache zusammengetragenen Bibliographie der ins Englische übersetzten Dichtung des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts (in der Ausstellung *A Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation*) arbeiten wollte², einem riesigen Projekt, dessen Früchte hier den Text-Ozean abgeben, auf dem die Fotografien als Inseln treiben, zusammen mit den «Textwolken» oder vielleicht auch «Eisschollenen»³, diesen als Wortinseln ausgebildeten Zitaten aus den Gedichten.

¹ Clive Scott, *The Spoken Image: Photography and Language* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999).

² Watts, 'Reminiscence', p./S. 299.

³ Watts, 'For My Friend, Max Sebald', *Ancient Sunlight*, p. 31. / «ice-floes of speech»; Watts, «For My Friend, Max Sebald», *Ancient Sunlight*, S. 31.

Anhang 1

«Stephen Watts In Conversation With
Hannes Schüpbach»

Das Gespräch ist in der Prototyp-Edition von
Stephen Watts' *Bibliography* abgedruckt

Mit Inhaltsverzeichnis der
Prototyp-Edition, 2021

STEPHEN WATTS

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MODERN POETRY
IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A WORK IN PROGRESS

VOL. I

STEPHEN WATTS IN CONVERSATION
WITH HANNES SCHÜPBACH

HS — We first met at The Horse Hospital in Bloomsbury, London, in December 2011, when we both presented work as part of a salon organised by the curator Gareth Evans. You were reading from your new book *Journey Across Breath/ Tragitto nel respiro* (2011), and I was projecting one of my silent films, *L'Atelier* (2007). Your text spoke of walking down a mountain road in the Alps and sensing in front of you another walker, who turns out to be your grandfather migrating to London aged 22, almost a century before. Such leaps in time, through the transport of imagination and memory, are at the heart of your poetry, as I have learned since, and there are, perhaps, similar moments in my films. In all of your poems I have been struck by your straightforward concern with people, life in the city (from humans to birds to plants), and the landscapes that matter to you and your work. They very strongly speak from that initial impetus of art, a deeply rooted personal urge and strong communal commitment, both to give form to what is manifested in one's existence and to contribute to the larger circles of being, to the possibilities, which are, by nature, social and political. Over the years I got to know another important part of your work, which is a bibliography of modern and contemporary poetry in English translation. You have pursued this immense work, as I see it, with an imaginary library in mind, a library that is a vital part of your art. The *Bibliography* is a labour of infinite curiosity and of love dedicated to the world and to poetic expression in all its languages. Thank you for agreeing to share some thoughts on this long-term project of yours. I'd be curious to hear about how you started it, what got it rolling in the first place.

SW — Well, you've described some of the impetuses very accurately in your thoughts above, for which I both thank you and agree with you. I'm glad of your perceptions regarding my poetry and I think those perceptions echo why I started working on the bibliography, which yes goes back about forty years now. Forty years of research and also forty (or well forty-five) years of writing. I started the bibliography precisely because I was a poet and because, if you want, of my vision of what poetry is and poetries are and can do. When I began trying to

write poetry (to make poetry and to be a poet, which are different though related things) I found that I was being drawn far more to poetry in translation than to contemporary poetry in English (or at least to mainstream poetries in English : there were and still are off-centre or marginalised or subverting English language poetries that are very strong and that I didn't properly know of at the time, that is in the late 1970s). I was reading poets such as Rimbaud, Trakl, Mandelstam, Tsvetaeva, Vallejo, Hölderlin, Sorley MacLean and Dante and at a certain stage, round about 1979 or 1980 I thought it would be interesting and probably useful to start listing the translations that were available for these and other poets. That's really how it started and I immediately realised that it could never be just a dry listing, but that it related intimately to the visions of poetry (the 'imaginary library' that you talk of above). Therefore, having started work on it I took to it wholeheartedly and with commitment and love. It is not inappropriate to call it a 'work of love' and in a way I would want to insist on calling it that !

But going back further, I'd trace the roots of this project even to my teenage years when I was reading and re-reading, in translation, Dostoyevsky and Wittgenstein, and then Dante and Erich Auerbach. It was Wittgenstein led me to Trakl and Rilke, Auerbach to a sense of translation vital to European history. And the fact that my mother's family were migrants, having come to London from northern Italy and Switzerland before the First World War, or that in years key to me, between the ages of 19 and 21 I lived on a predominantly Gaelic speaking island (so that I felt other languages behind my own poetry written in English).

HS — Did you perceive it as a long-term project and was it planned as a worldwide inventory of recent poetry translated into English from the very start?

SW — Yes, almost immediately I realised that it would be both a worldwide calling together of translated poetries and that it would be a very long-term and ongoing 'project' (project is an odd word to use in some ways, but let's stick with it for now). I felt this from the very start & in retrospect I think I must have been feeling this from before I actually began the work. It very quickly grew and grew : and of course this in part was because I had access to wonderful libraries : to the (then called) Arts Council Poetry Library, to the SSEES (School of Slavonic and East European Studies) Library at UCL, to SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) Library, all of them in central London. Incidentally it is worth saying that access to all those Libraries was free back in the late 1970s : Universities then still saw it as part of their purpose to offer free access to their Li-

braries to non-academic members of the public, to people who were members of the wider community who could indicate genuine interest and not only to students of those universities. I was very lucky (or put another way, it was as it should be) therefore to be able to physically see and access via these libraries poetries from round the world translated into English. It fed me wonderfully as a poet, but also it enabled me to progress the bibliography. The Poetry Library (now the Southbank National Poetry Library) was fast expanding its holdings in these years and has continued, through the work of a number of great librarians there, to do so, with the perception that translation matters becoming increasingly evident. But also SSEES, SOAS & Senate House Libraries of London University, or King's College, had great holdings of literature and poetry that usually included many, often otherwise difficult-to-find, translated books. It was always important to me to physically see the translated books, to hold them in my hands and to see them with my eyes and to read them as they were.

HS — What kept you going over the years? I mean, personal reasons, being a poet? Political reasons? Scientific reasons? Aesthetic reasons?

SW — Love and commitment kept me going and the knowledge (or stronger than that, the body feeling) that poetry in translation was feeding me as a poet and that such food was in a certain sense free, or at least was and need not be dictated by market economies. There is this lovely paradox : that translation is a both a localising and a globalising act at one and the same time, but in its globalising it need have nothing of the throttling oppression of material power, and indeed can be subversive of such globalisation. That fact also kept me going ! Because poetry and translation, are both *inter alia* subversive of political and economic nonsense, subversive of the oppressions of power. Personal contact also certainly kept me going : I remember great conversations with Jonathan Barker who was Director of the Poetry Library in the early '80s and indeed with almost all of his successors through to the present day, with Chris McCabe, who is deeply committed to the poetry of translation and to endangered literatures.

In 1979 I was living in the Whitechapel area of East London (where I still live to this day) and at that time racism very strongly affected certain parts of the community. There was a lot of violence and a strong need for concerted anti-racist commitment to overcome it. If in 1936 the Mosley's Blackshirts had tried to force fascism into the East End, then through the late '70s and '80s proto-fascist organisations such as the National Front were enacting severe racist hatred specifically

against the local Bangladeshi, but also against the wider community. When in 1980 I wrote the poem 'Brick Lane' (*The Blue Bag*, 2004) it was in memory of Altab Ali who was stabbed to death in a racist attack on his way home from Brick Lane in 1978 : the poem ends with the affirmations of "and the words grown bright with the body's belief, and life to be fought for and never to be taken away". And when I wrote 'Brick Lane Mela Poem' in around 2003 it was in total celebration of its Bangla spring festival. So also when I was compiling a 'Bengali Poetry In English Translation' file at that just times, I was of course aware of all this (just as I was aware that Bangladesh as a state had come into existence in 1971 as the result of a bloody conflict with Pakistan, or that Bangladesh was not West Bengal, even if they shared a same Bengali language). At a certain level, compiling a bibliography of poetry in translation is an act of multicultural affirmation, just as writing a poem about Brick Lane was and is.

But other things also kept me going. Meeting Max Sebald, for instance : this happened in 1990 after he had set up the British Centre for Literary Translation (BCLT) at UEA Norwich. His support and friendship meant a lot to me in the last decade of the C20th, and the fact that he valued, and said clearly that he valued, both my poetry and my bibliographic research. I received two or three Bursaries from BCLT during that decade which enabled me to further my research in Norwich and I also began to be invited to take part in translation seminars and conferences organised by BCLT at UEA. Max was also very supportive of my first successful application to the Arts Council in the early 1990s and financial support for my research from the Arts Council (& later from Arts Council England) came at a critical time, when I had been working for fifteen years on my own. Quite possibly I wouldn't have received that first funding without Sebald's support. Again around 2007 I received further substantial grant research funding from ACE which helped greatly and I remember in particular Kate Griffin's (at that time an Arts Officer at ACE, now Associate Programme Director at the National Centre for Writing in Norwich) instinctive sense of the potential value of my work. I would also like to mention Professor Norma Rinsler at King's College London and Daniel Weissbort, then editor of the journal MPT (Modern Poetry in Translation), who were both very supportive too of my bibliographic work in those years.

Finally, and very importantly, there is the sheer exuberance of the work ! I think of the many number of times I've either found a translation of a poet that I'd been almost yearning to find for years, or have come across an astonishing new translation. Some translators (maybe more so than poets !) have a

wonderfully beautiful energy in regard to language, or perhaps from standing back they can see the power or beauty of the original more clearly. To come across that in itself (for a poet like myself who loves lyric intensity) is reward enough. Then also I recall, just to give a small handful of examples, how intensely happy I was to finally see books that I'd maybe waited years to find : full-length translations of the Irish poet Seán Ó Ríordáin, of the Ukrainian poet Pavlo Tychyna ('Clarinet Of The Sun' !), or very early on in my research to find poets I'd not known of before, the Armenian Eghishe Charents, the Peruvian César Vallejo, the Indonesian Chairil Anwar, all of them great poets who I was so glad to see in English translation, or a little later Rosario Castellanos or Adélia Prado. Such things matter to me as a human being, feed me as a writer. So, there you are : love, obstinacy and delight are what kept me going, while being forced to remain, quite often, on the 'outside'.

HS — What is the scope of your *Bibliography* with regard to the time span and the regions covered?

SW — It's basically a bibliography of C20th, and now also C21st, poetry worldwide in English translation. When I started it in 1980 I had the idea of including titles that might be possible or reasonably easy for readers to find, so I included only translations published from in or after 1960. Both those dates, of 1900 and 1960, are somewhat arbitrary, and if I were starting work on the bibliography again I might have regarded 'modern' in a different sense, as covering a different time span, perhaps even back to the late 1700s and also to have included all translations published after 1945 rather than after 1960. It does seem odd to me not to have, say, Rimbaud or Baudelaire, or Hölderlin, or Ghalib, or José Martí in the bibliography. But even with its present parameters I think it has a pretty wide span both geographically and in time. I've only included books, though I have interpreted this term generously, and include chapbooks and pamphlets of very few pages, as well as anthologies and special issues of journals. I've not included individual translations in individual journals, i.e. the 'flow' of the bibliography is concerned with books and what might be thought of as books. And I haven't always included titles with tiny print runs or artist's books that are very expensive, nor have I included single poems on cards etc. But generally I have been inclusive rather than excluding, and where I have made exceptions, they have tended toward inclusion. The bibliography for the purpose of this printing ends with 2019 & I've yet to include titles published in 2020.

HS — What were the means and procedures to work on it in the beginning, and what are they today?

SW — I think that I've outlined some of these already. The basic means originally involved going to various libraries, visiting them, spending time with their books, taking details of relevant titles etc. That hasn't changed, that remains the basic procedure (& it is what has made these current months of 'lock down', when most of the Libraries most relevant to my research have been closed, rather frustrating). Though much more information is available on-line – and certainly I make use of these resources – I still feel the total need to actually see each title that I am including : both to sense its full realities, but also so as to be able to give the most accurate and detailed information. Although in 1980 and for some years after there was no such thing as the internet or on-line access, back then there were their equivalents : publishers' book lists, distributors' lists etc. I remember well the very detailed lists produced by what was probably the forerunner of the current 'Small Press Distribution' in Berkeley CA, which was a storehouse of genuine information and pointers to sources. Such volumes were in the various Libraries I've mentioned and given that they were often compendiums of source material relating to small presses, and given that the majority of translated poetry (of all poetry in fact) is published by small presses, these sources were invaluable. It didn't mean you had seen the book, but it did allow you to know that a book had been published or was intended to be published. One thing that on-line development has allowed, or has much enhanced, is the ability to 'visit' libraries without physically being there : thus I have been able to access the holdings of the National Libraries of New Zealand or Australia, or the holdings of the Library of Congress or New York Public Library, or any library worldwide, and also I can see on-line publishers' websites and so on. This greatly facilitates a knowledge of what has been published, though, as I say, this was also possible before on-line research became possible, and also it is I think important to underline the difference between knowledge and poetry. This is intended as a bibliography of translated poetry, and not a closet of stored knowledge (though a 'barn or storehouse of knowledge' is a nice idea).

HS — Each entry on these pages has its carefully shaped formulaic form. How did the specific visual formatting come about?

SW — I think it came about organically, or through practice : I personally didn't too much like, or at times did not find useful, the formulaic lay-outs of accepted bibliographic convention. This refers in particular to my perception of the strong need to avoid making the bibliography into any sort of stiff list, or to make of it a coloniser's map : the bibliography deals with the stuff of poetry and translation and I didn't want to knock

the soul out of the stuffing. So I came up with (or rather I reached by trial and instinct) a sort of a mathematical lay-out that tries to hold within itself some sense of the vital elements of poetry and translation whilst also giving all relevant information in as accessible a form as possible. Each entry then is a sort of 'baking tray' with the ladle of the poet's name and the dough of the title ! To take the analogy further, the final result of bread baked for nourishment will come when readers or viewers of the bibliography then buy, or read, or access, or talk about the titles within the files.

HS — How do you see the advantages or disadvantages of the English language as a base for this work?

SW — I think this is a question that registers on many levels and is very complex. On the one hand, the *raison d'être* of the bibliography is precisely to try to provide some sense of what has been (and thus also what has not been) translated into English of modern and contemporary poetry worldwide. That might seem initially to be a simple and uncontaminated gesture : and indeed I think the impetus to know, and to read, what has been translated is still basically healthy and rejuvenative. But language is not just a joy or a possession (indeed it is surely not ever a 'possession' !) and the uses of a language can be very ambiguous. Paul Celan (whose 100th birth anniversary is in precisely these days) showed us this, choosing to write, and to continue writing, in the language that had killed his parents and had tried to obliterate much of his culture. It takes enormous courage to do this : it also shows us the toxicity of language, and there are many other such examples of poets worldwide expressing their adherence to and in a language in order to try to de-contaminate, or to positively re-contaminate, it.

There was another thought or feeling though that occurred to me early on in my research : namely that however wonderful and rich the English language (after all, my mother tongue) is and might be, there must be greater storehouses of rich poetry throughout other languages ! It simply stands to reason as a basic given and I wanted strongly to widen out my English !

On the other hand English was, and still arguably is, very much a colonial language, and it was and still is one of the main languages of slavery. And these aspects of English (world-wide, in many manifestations) have become institutionalised, so that unfortunately there is an underscore of oppressiveness and oppression to what is a beautiful language : we have to know and to admit this. It shouldn't stop my compiling a bibliography, but it should inform how I compile it, the ways in which it is put together and disseminated. Perhaps the strongest expression

of this arc of problems is the way in which so much poetry in English (& perhaps all the widely spoken and politically dominant languages) tends to culturally invest linguistic value in individual expression, or in the poet as ‘poet’ : and yet there are many cultures and languages (& there really is no reason why English shouldn’t, given different histories, have been one of them) that value language and poetic expression as communal, or as more rooted in the oral as against the written, or that see poetry hearted in what is shared rather than only having its virtue in what is individual (here ‘personal’ and ‘individual’ are different terms), or that value sound and music, more than static writing, as stages for meaning. It is indeed often precisely such cultures as these ones, or those cultures that have always swayed to these other values, that have experienced an almost concrete overlay of oppressive English historically.

In these situations the poetries and languages of such cultures may have had the breath crushed out of them, and in such situations the translation of their poetries into English takes place in a wholly different orbit of welfare. Moreover much written (as distinct from ‘oral’, though I don’t know that it helps to distinguish the two) poetry through much of Africa, throughout Polynesia and First Nation America and aboriginal Australia is now written in English : so that here also the perception and definitions of ‘translation’ must become more friable, the notion of language more hybrid, more open to difference. And English, as also in India and South Asia and elsewhere, was and is often used by the ‘colonised’ to subvert the common language of the coloniser (& the same argument of course can be made concerning French or Spanish or Portuguese globally). So again the nature of poetry and the role of translation need to be re-examined, reconstituted, re-invigorated and constantly questioned.

HS — What are the potential uses of such an encompassing bibliography? For you or for others?

SW — For me it has not so much a use, or uses, rather it is a source of breath and food for life. I hope that it can also be this for some other people, and beyond that I think that it has real value in a wide range of academic discourse, in the teaching of poetry (if poetry indeed is to be taught), or at least within the range and scope of translation studies that it might provoke and allow fresh discussion within more open fields. And in terms of ‘bringing into English’ I suppose I do hope that ‘our Englishes’, our poetries, might be enriched and at times fractured open by new and not necessarily foreseen energies. Is this too much to hope for ?!

Maybe it is worth adding that my bibliographic work has ‘fed’ two anthologies that I’ve edited in the past : ‘Voices Of Con-

science' (Iron Press 1995) & 'Mother Tongues' (MPT 2001) & that at present I am compiling a collection of almost 100 poems from 100 languages for PEER Gallery in Hoxton to reflect the range of languages spoken in the London Borough of Hackney. This as well as the exhibition I am doing with you at the Nunnery in Bow and in Zurich which foregrounds the bibliography !

HS — How do you think about the *Bibliography* as an imaginary library and a piece of art?

SW — I very much like your sense or perception of the bibliography as an imaginary library, or as 'an imagined library'. I think you have got to the heart of the matter very acutely ! And as an 'imaginary library' we are close to certain notions on the one hand of Borges & others, but also to our individual imaginations as writers and readers. Your question also interests me greatly because it reminds me of something I had not seen in parallel before, namely that in some of my own poetry written precisely in those years of the late 1970s & early 1980s, I was writing about hidden libraries (for instance in 'Lord In Dream ...' which dates from about 1980 and has some echo of Hölderlin : "the library of a culture yet unearthed / and thought printed in its bright language"; *The Lava's Curl*, p. 14) and in 'Republic Of Dogs/Republic Of Birds' (that I wrote in the 1980s though it was published only in 2016) I write "On the other side of the world there is a library" (16) and "There was a fire in the Library of the Republic" (60), while section 22 is in effect a wish-list of as yet untranslated (or unpublished) world poetry titles. And one of the things I have most liked about your and my work together is how you instinctively, but also with very apt reasoning, perceived this bibliography as a work of art, or a piece of art, and of how you have put together the exhibition and included the printed version of the bibliography as part of the exhibition (the first time most of the bibliography has been printed at all and the first time for sure that it is printed in its ongoing entirety) : as a piece of art. That for me also underlines its subversive nature : for at times only art (or literature) can really subvert the stiff and stringent breath-stops that material strangulations provoke. Thus a bibliography holds within itself an imagined library, a place where translation is a vital art.

HS — Up to now only small sections of this *Bibliography* have been published, the latest occasions being 'A Listing of Translated Swiss Literature (Since 2010)', in this case of poetry and prose, in the 'Swiss' issue of *The Riveter* (London: ELN, 2018), and 'A Listing Of Romanian Poetry & Prose Fiction In English Translation (Since 2010)', in *The Romanian Riveter* (2020), is that right?

SW — Yes, you're right. And it is not something I am happy with myself about. I am for instance very grateful to *The Riveter* for having printed small parts of the bibliography in three of their issues (the Swiss and Romanian ones that you mention, but also before that in the *The Baltics Riveter*, for Estonian, Latvian & Lithuanian poetry and prose). But I haven't been effective in promoting, or even in promoting knowledge of, the bibliography. Colleagues at King's College, London did try to put the bibliography as it then was on-line about twenty years ago through the Computing in Humanities initiative, but somehow it didn't happen. Probably it was force of circumstance and in truth no-one's 'fault'. I know that the physical and mental effort of keeping it going and updating it and trawling through libraries and book shops and on-line sites has often not left me good time to see beyond the work itself : and it is part of my writing life and I have always been a slow writer in the sense of publishing, even if the acts of writing have largely been more explosive, or at least have happened at levels of high energies. Maybe though now is in fact *just the right time* to be publishing its first full printed version and maybe interest & energies will allow both fuller print and on-line versions over the next very few years : I hope so.

HS — As this bibliography (as any bibliography) represents a library in condensed form, I can see it also as a biographical archive of all the books of poetry published in English translation during your – the author-artist's – lifetime.

SW — I'm not sure I completely understand your question here : but I don't think I see it as a biographical archive of all the books of poetry published in English translation during my life time at any rate. I feel that my own lifespan is not relevant to the bibliography or to the issues it might raise, or allow or throw light on, other than that it would be a different bibliography had I lived at a different time. But what seems to matter more to me is the span of language, the hybridity of movement, the lovely openness that translation can bring to what we all do.

HS — Is it the work of a poet who desires to be in the picture about what happens in poetry beyond the limits and the limitations of national cultures, and fed by a thirst for the diversity in a truly human world?

SW — No, I don't think I desire those things, or in a sense that I desire much for myself ! I do though, I think, require such things, as a poet, of myself. I am rather dumbfounded by the small worlds that sometimes poets seem to inhabit, by the bubble of language they can't seem to stray beyond. Of course the local is vital, to know what you are where you are, if possible.

And I hope I would never want to put constraints on what a poet may think, or write, or do. But surely the writing and translating of poetry *beyond national boundaries* is an exact act of ecological necessity, a series of acts that may possibly help allow our continued existence ?

HS — For the exhibition at the Nunnery, Bow Arts, London, and at the Strauhof in Zurich, we will mount approximately 1900 pages of your *Bibliography* in its present state directly onto the four-metre high walls, as a background for a space-spanning photo installation and corresponding to a cosmos of world poetry. The scope of the *Bibliography* thus will be experienced physically, like a library one can walk through, or a barn.

SW — Yes, and I love that idea. A translation cave (to ironically echo Plato), but also very much a barn, a space (in this instance a Gallery space) that you can walk into, a translation zone that can be freely entered, an imagined library where the imagination can harvest. Again I find it interesting that you have used the word barn, because there have been times in my life – for instance in Swaledale where there are small barns in each of hundreds of fields, or when I’ve been in rural Slovenia with its proliferation of wooden barns, or in the villages of the high Italian Alps in Alta Valcamonica where my grandfather came from – when I have viscerally felt the presence of words in the land, or within the landscape : so in Swaledale I saw the barns as word-hoards (or even at times as word hordes), each field with its own specified library ! The same on Árainn Mhór where the stone ‘baths’ in each tiny stonewalled field made me think of them as language-holders, or places where the locality of language was being safeguarded, a typology that has increased sensitivity in a place where language may be endangered. I think again of Paul Celan here, of language enmeshed and oppressed. And lower down in Valcamonica are sites of neolithic rock carving which to my mind are close to poetry – each carving a sort of poem in itself, the use of language in order to convey – and perhaps there are real echoes of this in the barn-halves of the houses that can still be seen in the high villages. I remember my mother describing to me how as summer holiday children in her grandparents’ home in the small village of San Carlo (just north of Poschiavo) in Switzerland she and her cousins would jump in play from the barn-half of the house : thus are poems formed. I’ve written about all these things in my own poems : the bibliography as ‘barn’ for me is then a natural extension, a visceral part, of my work as a poet.

HS — Assisting in the formatting of your bibliography files I have understood new aspects of this work of yours, one being

that the titles of all these books form in and by themselves a sort of index to the poetries of all the authors and to possible territories of poetry.

SW — Some of the titles of the books are magnificent ! So also the names of some publishers ! For instance among US small publishers : ‘Holy Cow! Press’ on the one hand and ‘Phoneme Media’ on the other : and everything conceivable in between ! And in terms of book titles, well it would be great to write a poem-list of such titles as an appendix to these volumes & maybe I will & maybe I should !

HS — How has work on the *Bibliography* become, over the years, an integral part of your practice and of your life? I know that you are regularly looking through publishers’ news lists, scouting libraries and bookstores and visiting poetry events at various cultural institutions in London, reflecting the city’s diversity.

SW — About twenty years ago I worked on a six month project working as a poet alongside the Community Health Advocates who interpreted between medical staff and patients at the London Hospital in Whitechapel. It was, for me, an extraordinary piece of work to be asked to do. These ‘translators’ performed a vital service – since after all the doctors and nurses at the Hospital would not have been able to understand, and therefore to treat, patients who had need of describing their symptoms in languages other than English. Quite rightly they were called ‘Community Health Workers’ as their roles were more than just to ‘interpret’. Working with them showed me that translation is a vital art and I soon took this ‘mantra’ over into my sense of literary translation : that the translation of poetry too has an utterly vital function. In fact I think that the translation of poetry, as indeed its writing, is an utterly vital art. In this sense also the *Bibliography* has always been an integral and urgent part of my life and art.

This in addition to the delight of scouting libraries and bookshops and going to a huge range of poetry events and readings : I have been to very many libraries and bookstores over the years, and to a huge range of poetry readings in very many languages ! There is a rich history to be written of multilingual readings even just in London : readings in Yiddish, in Urdu, in Punjabi, in Bengali, in Turkish, in Kurdish, in various Spanishes, in Basque & in Catalan, in Armenian & Georgian & Farsi, in Polish & Greek. But isn’t this what living in London and writing poetry in English is all about ? Well, for me, that is what it has been & still is all about !

The final words of my book ‘Republic Of Dogs/Republic Of Birds’ are ‘(Unwritten. Mislaid. Or Lost)’. Much of our lives are ! Perhaps the work of this *Bibliography*, as an effort of cultural activism, is in part an attempt to make sure that these translations are not ‘unwritten, mislaid, or lost’.

HS — Of course, there’s internet, but seeing and sometimes owning the books is important? Physical books are important for history, as witnesses of a certain time, a certain achievement in time.

SW — Seeing the books certainly is very important. Owning them : well not in the sense of exclusive ‘possession’, no, not that at all. But in the sense of putting together a library, yes very definitely. Of knowing that I am creating also a physical library that I wish were more shared and that by the end of my life I hope will be secured somewhere accessibly and safe. Books are beautiful in and of themselves – others have written so well about this – and yes they are also witness to certain periods in time : but more than that, their value is ongoing. I think I am slightly wary of this idea of ‘witness’ or indeed of ‘periods of time’: on the one hand such witness is vital (think of Celan, again, or of the flowering of modern Scottish Gaelic poetry in the face of chronic English cultural imperialism). But at the same time we have to see that ‘witness’ can be part of the worst forms of nationalist expression too. And one thing I am wary of is that this *Bibliography* might reinforce language nationalisms ...

HS — The beauty of physical books lies in their formal beauty as both a designed and utilitarian object, with page spaces following each other, each one brimming with language.

SW — Again, yes, I agree very much with you, and I have tried to allow a sense of this to shine through the formal constraints of the bibliography. But also I can love scrawny books, books that have been published, or translated, on a shoestring, stapled and strapped together books, books that have come into this world struggling and shrieking and causing trouble !!

HS — I also know, that the act of writing down, by hand, a record of the reality of that book in front of you, is part of how you work ‘in the field’.

SW — The act of physically writing out longhand the details of a title is for me very enjoyable (if at times frustrating !) and is part of how I work. At the same time I also much enjoy the act of adding new titles to the files on my laptop or of going on-line so to do. And where it is feasible I will go to a Library with

either a notebook or the laptop to update the bibliography. There are files of longhand entries (& many loose leaves of the same !) and who know what may become of them : but the on-line entries, files and folders are also vital. I can think of a scribe in Bede's Northumberland or of St. Jerome considering translators : but I must also think into the future and try to see how best to disperse what I have so far compiled !

HS — In what ways has the *Bibliography* and work on it become part of your life as a poet?

SW — It is, quite simply, an integral part of my work and life as a poet : just that ! My poetry has enthused the bibliography and the bibliography has enthused my poetry !

HS — The *Bibliography* is both an artwork, as it reflects an act of dedication to something one senses 'has to be done', and also a very useful future resource for others. Do you have any thoughts about the future of this work?

SW — I feel that it is essential that the completed ongoing bibliography, if I can put it that way, is published, preferably in however many volumes in book form and placed in various Libraries for use and reference (& hopefully also for some delight). But it is also essential, I believe, for its contents to be placed on-line and for its information to be made available in ways and functions that can thus go beyond what the physical book can offer. Beyond that, possibilities for cross-reference, for comparative criticism, for subaltern studies, for aesthetics of resolution, for an architecture not just of structure but also of love, for the ecologies of poetry and maybe above all for the poetries of ecology are, I hope, implicit within the bibliography as a work of art, and in the very human act of a poet in compiling it for hoped-for use.

HS — The *Bibliography* is 'A Bibliography' and 'A Work In Progress' by nature and due to many limitations at play.

SW — All bibliographies will be 'in progress' and cannot be finished. There must always be another translated title done in obscurity, or done far off, or done nearby with love but then abandoned that will elude the bibliographer. Or I very much hope this is the case, or why bother !! Nothing can be complete : or if it is then surely our life here will end ? And there are other, more quotidian, reasons why it remains unfinished : a lot of my work in these last months before you are printing the volumes has been done during 'lock down' at the time of Covid 19 : therefore I've been unable to access almost all Libraries in London and thus a fair number of titles have had to

remain italicised as ‘known of, but unseen’. That has been quite frustrating, because such work would in other circumstances have been possible to complete. But hopefully there will be time later : and in a way it’s very appropriate to stay incomplete.

Therefore, yes, this bibliography is ongoing and by nature will not be finished : that indeed is its definition of completion ! The complete is what can never be completed and the inherent humility of that position is perhaps a hope for all our futures. When it comes down to it, I think that poetry (and the bibliography for me is a part of poetry) remains a hope for human life, one of the most solid and real hopes that we have and that poetry as subversion is the most positive procedural hope for our continued lives, whatever forms that may take.

Stephen Watts
A Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation

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Stephen Watts
A Bibliography Of Modern Poetry In English Translation
A Work In Progress

The present first edition comprises three copies
each in four clothbound volumes

plus pages printed on loose sheets for the exhibitions
Hannes Schüpbach & Stephen Watts: Explosion of Words
at Nunnery Gallery, Bow Arts, London, 17 February – 11 April 2021
and *Explosion der Wörter*
at Strauhof, Zurich, 12 – 23 May 2021

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with the author

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Anhang 2

Hannes Schüpbach, *Explosion of Words/Explosion der Wörter*

24 Fotografien

(Seiten aus Teil 1 der Publikation)

&

Stephen Watts, *Explosion of Words/Explosion der Wörter*

Gedichte mit deutschen Übersetzungen
von Hannes Schüpbach

(Seiten aus Teil 2 der Publikation)

Hannes Schüpbach

**Explosion of Words /
Explosion der Wörter**

**Dedicated to /
Gewidmet
Stephen Watts**

**With an essay by /
Mit einem Textbeitrag von
Jo Catling**

I walked into silence
and spoke with horses and lay down asleep
in all of those fourteen thousand little fields
each with its waterbed and drift of flowers.
It was quiet there. I heard silence swarming.
And liquid arrows bubbled inside my eyes :
yellow and molten, red and violet and blue.

2



I should have let myself collapse in the apricot valleys
of the highest sierras

1

& 'political hurt can hurt us no more' & 'the noise of
the heart is a furtive claw' & 'the remote places
are the heart of our world'



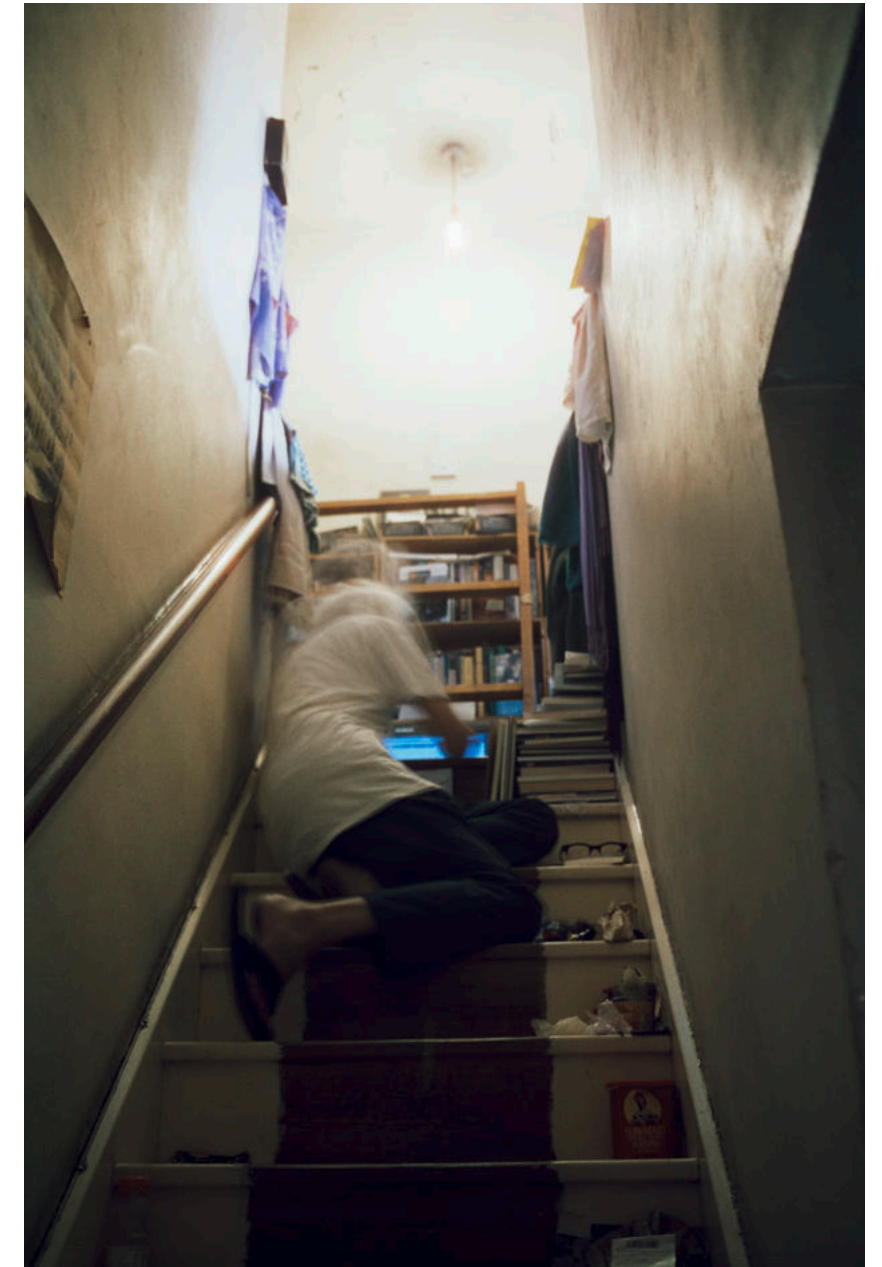
And I stand here now in Fieldgate Street watching as
a corner of zinc flies from the coppice roof to
land by my unflummoxed feet

And I take the found zinc object as a door-stop for my
hearthless home – we who have to live in some
new degenerate regeneration zone



Suddenly I plunge south into
the river of dreams and lean into the cave of memory,
and contort myself through unmanageable portals,
through the space that isn't there,
but is !

But I am sitting here listening to Dinu Lipatti play chorales and
partitas of Bach : & all else is illusion
or else a new explosion



How did we manage that imperfect feat of our most disingenuous balance ?

And how did we carry ourselves to this point in space and time, in the market of our days ?



Look ! A bicycle plunges down the slope of dreams.





The sun has risen & burnt a hole in the gauze
of the skies and now
a full moon is swimming in the quiet horizons.
Little ice paths spangle the obdurate tilth of
your slippery fields

...

Under a caustic moonlight, in an air of tangerine
suns. Can't you see amidst all
this wreckage, our cravings for human freedoms?
Our freedoms that are kin to voluntary poverty,
as Vladimír Holan reasoned ...

Come with a stick but be not blind. I'll try.





and when you see that kestrel
 pinioned on its wing-bone, sitting at ease in
 the middle air, shifting sideways on sudden
 gusts - its unperplexed ligaments
 ready to dive it through
 skies of reality

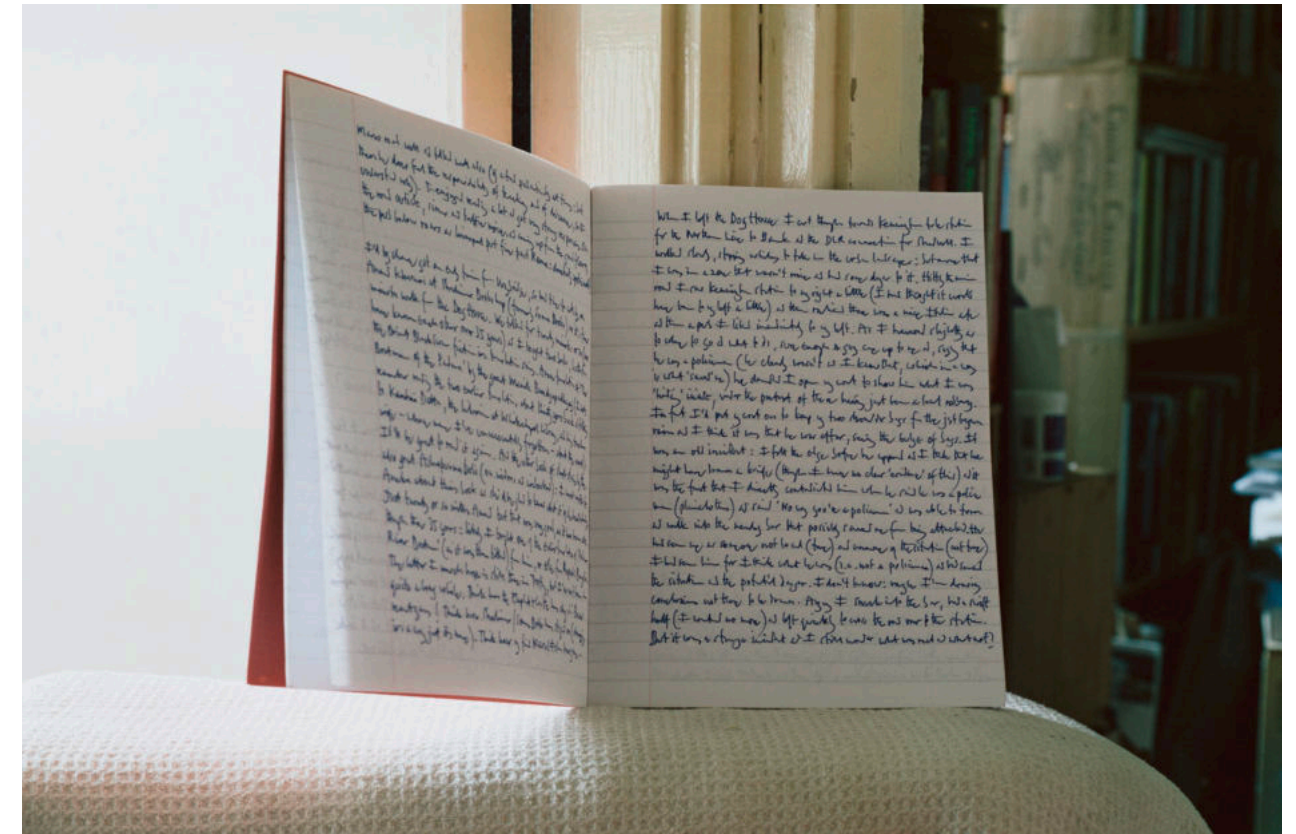
...

One time in my house on the burnt island a wren
 deep-dived by a buzzard fled in through
 my blue open door but then was as
 bone burst by human space
 as by any beak or claw

We'd talked about walking
 from my village to yours : cutting a section across the Alps
 or a section through a glacier's brain.



When you live on the twenty-first floor and down there in the paved market you can see your friends ...



Is that what is meant by migration ?

A smile moving from one face to another ...

I'll slowly walk down the slight curve
and incline of the Lane,
my hand in the hands of my friends in
a tight drizzle towards the fizz of far
light

Toward the tunnel of dark air that
is neither light nor real,
but either must be Bethnal Green or
else is Beani Bazar or the relic of a
curling dream



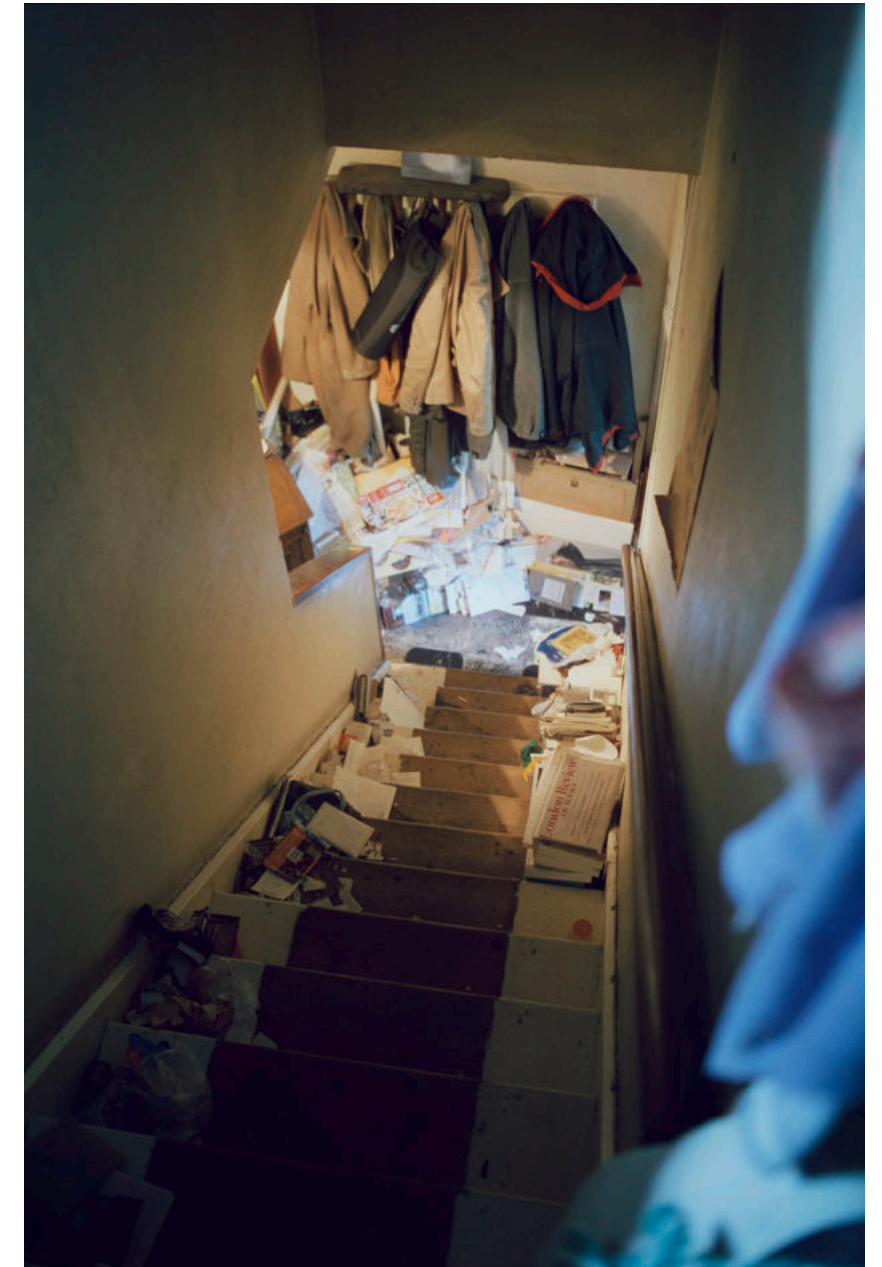
I walk out in the dark light of the road
& hear the rotting of a sufi music
and I fall apart – or how else would I find
the mad-rapt sound I need and nowhere
else can find

he passes a few words to me
and I have to juggle
them :





And the squirrel of language comes to greet you,
 comes to your room
 as you sleep



I furl & unfurl my words : I make poems as I walk
 I walk to work with words

My carbon footprint is very low, but my feet have
 printed poems throughout these roads



Ancient sunlight plunges through my veins. What I
know of language is harsh as rock.



when I see you
as you are, standing, falling -
away from me -

breaking jar - then
you're gone and I am broken :
it hurts too much

Almost I began
talking in a language I no longer knew. Odd, but.



There might be the pure truths of television, since
how can what we see deceive. Or the leveragings
of virtual realities. Or cynicisms that are become
swerved geographies, or pure economies. Or ...

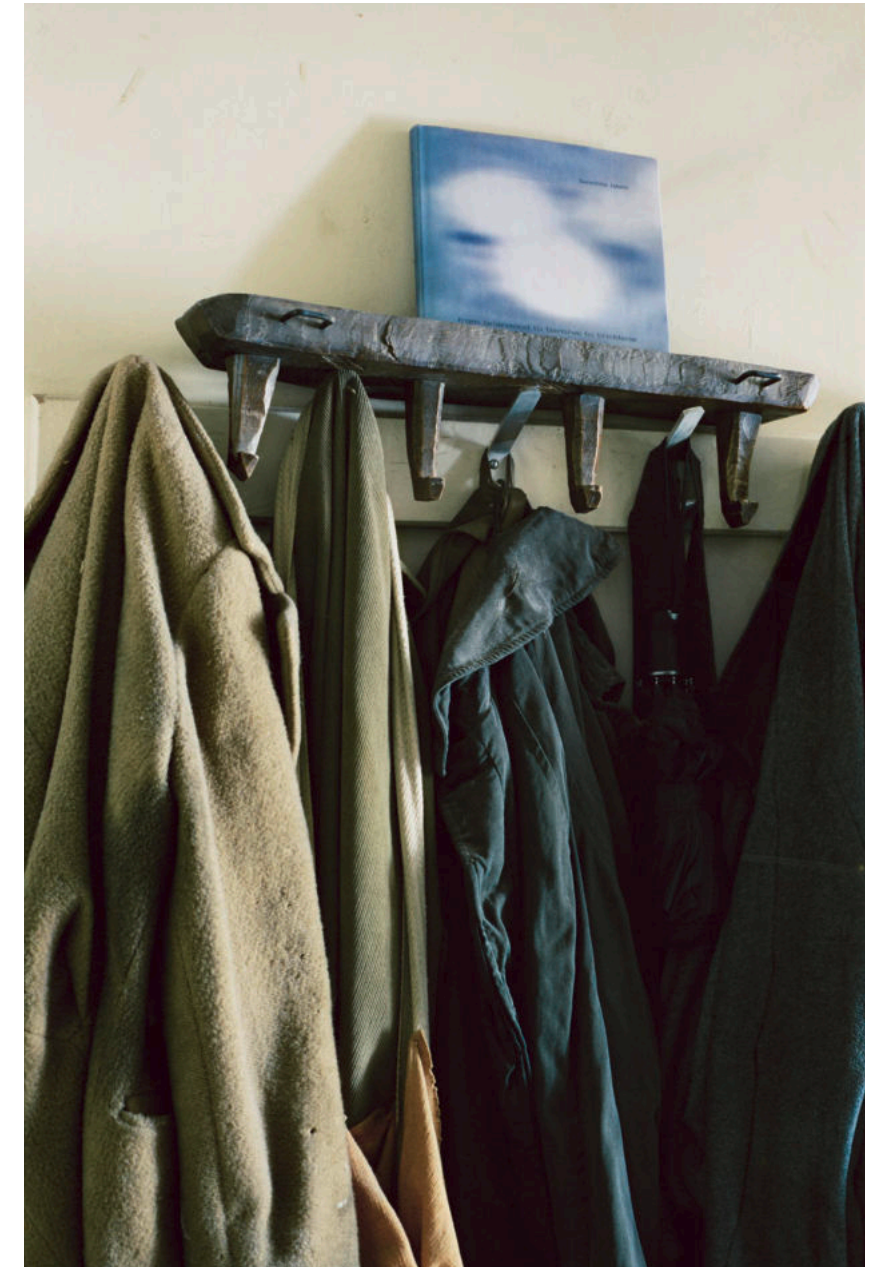
Whatever. Don't talk to me. Don't even try.

Cannon Street outside abandoned corporate building :
bitter-cress, lavender, rose

Aldersgate: large crop of chickweed, lime flowers, yarrow,
plantain leaves, wildrocket, mint



24



23

What keeps me going is going to keep my heart on
my shoulders and allow me to weep

...

What keeps me going in the face of unknowing is
the face of unknowing

Photographs and passages from poems Fotografien und Gedichtzeilen

- 1 Wall with drawing by Michael Watts
Wand mit Zeichnung von Michael Watts
I walked into silence (from the poem / aus dem Gedicht 'Máirtín Ó Direáin')
- 2 Library space with light bulb
Bibliothek mit Glühbirne
I should have let myself collapse in the apricot valleys (But Now I Live On A Sorrowful Planet / Aber jetzt lebe ich auf einem sorgenvollen Planeten)
- 3 Pastel drawing by Stephen Watts and old telephone
Pastell von Stephen Watts und alter Telefonapparat
And I stand here now in Fieldgate Street (My Grandfather Worked In Pizza Express ... / Mein Grossvater arbeitete im Pizza Express ...)
- 4 Coat on the door, pair of sheep shears
Türe mit angehängter Jacke, Schafschere & 'political hurt can hurt us no more'
(My Grandfather Worked In Pizza Express ... / Mein Grossvater arbeitete im Pizza Express ...)
- 5 Bureau with photograph of Stephen Watts' grandmother
Sekretär mit Fotografie von Stephen Watts' Grossmutter
Suddenly I plunge south into the river of dreams (Cheshire Street)
- 6 A short stop between floors
Zwischenhalt auf der Treppe
But I am sitting here listening to Dinu Lipatti (Listening To Dinu Lipatti Play Bach / Hören wie Dinu Lipatti Bach spielt)
- 7 View onto pergola
Aussicht auf Pergola
How did we manage that imperfect feat (Watney Market, October 2006 / Watney Market, im Oktober 2006)

- 8 Bicycles on balcony, back gardens, alley
Fahrräder auf Balkon, Hintergärten, Durchgang
Look ! A bicycle plunges down the slope of dreams (Watney Market, October, 2006 / Watney Market, im Oktober 2006)
- 9 Flint from the Thames
Flint vom Themseufer
The sun has risen & burnt a hole in the gauze of the skies (Little Fiction For Lovely Nichita Stănescu / Kleine Dichtung dem herrlichen Nichita Stănescu)
- 10 Paper bag sculpture
Packpapier-Objekt
Come with a stick but be not blind. I'll try (Early Morning Visit From David Silver / Besuch von David Silver am frühen Morgen)
- 11 View towards neighbouring houses and trees
Fenster auf Nachbarhäuser und Bäume
We'd talked about walking from my village to yours (For My Friend, Max Sebald / Für meinen Freund Max Sebald)
- 12 Library corner with geological hammer, and drawing by Tonino Guerra
Bibliothek mit geologischem Hammer und Zeichnung von Tonino Guerra
and when you see that kestrel (Birds Of East London / Vögel in East London)
- 13 Shirt in the bathtub
Hemd in der Badewanne
When you live on the twenty-first floor (Birds Of East London / Vögel in East London)
- 14 Notebook
Notizheft
Is that what is meant by migration ? (Old Women Of My Childhoods / Alte Frauen meiner Kindheiten)
- 15 Upstairs library
Bibliothek im oberen Stock
I'll slowly walk down the slight curve (Brick Lane Mela Poem / Gedicht zur Brick Lane Mela)
- 16 Library and bed
Bibliothek und Bett
he passes a few words to me (For Esmail Kh'oi / Für Esmail Kh'oi)

- 17 Library, with Nâzım Hikmet poster
Bibliothek, mit Nâzım-Hikmet-Poster
And the squirrel of language comes to greet you (For Esmail Kh'oi / Für Esmail Kh'oi)
- 18 Staircase, looking down
Treppe, von oben
I furl & unfurl my words (Ancient Sunlight / Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit)
- 19 The only place with connection to the internet
Der einzige Ort mit Verbindung zum Internet
Ancient sunlight plunges through my veins (Ancient Sunlight / Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit)
- 20 Photo of grandmother with her daughters, green twine
Foto Grossmutter und Töchter, grüner Zwirn
when I see you as you are (Thirty-Six Short Takes On Pain / Sechsendreissig kurze Gedanken an den Schmerz)
- 21 Grandparents with their daughters, Stephen Watts' mother top right
Grosseltern und Töchter, Stephen Watts' Mutter hinten rechts
Almost I began talking in a language I no longer knew (Back From Ravenseat / Zurück aus Ravenseat)
- 22 Driftwood and pieces of coal from the banks of the Thames
Treibholz und Kohlestücke vom Themseufer
There might be the pure truths of television (My Friend, You Who ... / Mein Freund, der du ...)
- 23 Block of wood used as a doorstop
Holzstück, das als Türstopper dient
Cannon Street outside abandoned corporate building (To End With ... / Am Ende noch ...)
- 24 Coatrack and wardrobe hooks from Val Camonica
Garderobe und Hakenleiste aus dem Val Camonica
What keeps me going (What Keeps Me Going ... / Am Leben hält mich ...)

The expression 'explosion of words' can be found in Stephen Watts' poem 'For My Friend, Max Sebald': 'but this has become an explosion of words on the scarp of my pain' (*Ancient Sunlight*, pp. 31-32). See also 'In your mind words exploded – they pistoned and shunted like dark magma and shot out volcanic gobs and flared at the earth's edge', in his poem 'Marina', dedicated to Marina Tsvetaeva (*The Blue Bag*, 2004, p. 18).

Der Ausdruck «Explosion der Wörter» findet sich in Stephen Watts' Gedicht «Für meinen Freund Max Sebald»: «nun kommt daraus die Explosion der Wörter im Steilhang meines Schmerzes» (*Ancient Sunlight*, S. 31-32). Siehe auch «In deinem Kopf explodierten Wörter – sie kolbten und rangierten wie dunkles Magma und schossen vulkanische Klumpen heraus und flammten auf am Rand der Erde» in seinem Marina Zwetajewa gewidmeten Gedicht «Marina» (*The Blue Bag*, 2004, S. 18; hier übersetzt).

Twenty-four framed photographs, with screen-printed 'text explosions' by Stephen Watts; 55.4 × 81.9 × 4 cm each; overall width 24 m. The text excerpts are from Stephen Watts' book *Ancient Sunlight* (London: Enitharmon, 2014), where they appear in the same sequence as in *Explosion of Words*, together with more poems.

Vierundzwanzig gerahmte Fotografien, mit «Textexplosionen» von Stephen Watts in Siebdruck; je 55,4 × 81,9 × 4,0 cm; Gesamtbreite 24 m. Die Textausschnitte stammen aus Stephen Watts' Buch *Ancient Sunlight* (London: Enitharmon, 2014), wo sie in der gleichen Reihenfolge erscheinen wie in *Explosion der Wörter*, zusammen mit weiteren Gedichten.

Teil 2

Gedichte



Stephen Watts

**Explosion of Words /
Explosion der Wörter**

**19 Poems /
Gedichte**

With German translations by /
Mit deutschen Übersetzungen von
Hannes Schüpbach

With very special thanks to Eleonore Frey, for her attention to detail and the opportunity for friendly discussion about the translations in search of a light-footed German text.

Mit grossem Dank an Eleonore Frey für die präzise Durchsicht und freundschaftliche Diskussion der Übersetzungen auf der Suche nach einem leichtfüssigen deutschen Text.

19 Poems

Máirtín Ó Direáin

But Now I Live On A Sorrowful Planet

My Grandfather Worked In Pizza Express ...

Cheshire Street

Listening To Dinu Lipatti Play Bach

Watney Market, October 2006

Little Fiction For Lovely Nichita Stănescu

Early Morning Visit From David Silver

For My Friend, Max Sebald

Birds Of East London

Old Women Of My Childhoods

Brick Lane Mela Poem

For Esmail Kh'oi

Ancient Sunlight

Thirty-Six Short Takes On Pain

Back From Ravenseat

My Friend, You Who ...

To End With ...

What Keeps Me Going ...

19 Gedichte

Máirtín Ó Direáin

Aber jetzt lebe ich auf einem sorgenvollen Planeten

Mein Grossvater arbeitete im Pizza Express ...

Cheshire Street

Hören wie Dinu Lipatti Bach spielt

Watney Market, im Oktober 2006

Kleine Dichtung dem herrlichen Nichita Stănescu

Besuch von David Silver am frühen Morgen

Für meinen Freund Max Sebald

Vögel in East London

Alte Frauen meiner Kindheiten

Gedicht zur Brick Lane Mela

Für Esmail Kh'oi

Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit

Sechsenddreissig kurze Gedanken an den Schmerz

Zurück aus Ravenseat

Mein Freund, der du ...

Am Ende noch ...

Am Leben hält mich ...

Máirtín Ó Direáin

Máirtín, I walked to your home
from the ferry pier at Cill Rónáin : it
was a lovely five miles, though it took me
fifty years. But it was a beautiful walking,
wild garlic on your paths, cormorant seas,
honeysuckle, furling bracken, honey bees.
I blew you a kiss when I got to your house
though you might not have wanted a kiss.
The little stream shimmied down the shore.
Below your barn bare limestone then more,
your stone path with tiny lilies going down.
A rain cloud is gathered across the spine of
your island where the houses climb the hill
above Corrúch where I walked into silence
and spoke with horses and lay down asleep
in all of those fourteen thousand little fields
each with its waterbed and drift of flowers.
It was quiet there. I heard silence swarming.
And liquid arrows bubbled inside my eyes :
yellow and molten, red and violet and blue.
Soon I will have to go, walking fast to reach
the five o'clock ferry back to Ros an Mhíl.
And then the bus to Galway and that banal,
savage bird, Shannon to Stansted. Not that
I wanted to, Máirtín : I'd rather stay here.
I eased my body under an upturned coracle
its blue-tarred carcass, then the sky above.
Now it's time to leave your house, I'll blow
you one more kiss, although you might not
want my kiss : this is what I came here for,
these words, the stone sleepers, language
that matters, language that can say "yes".
And the swell of real time against shores
of inhabited space.

Máirtín Ó Direáin

Máirtín, ich kam zu Fuss zu dir
vom Pier in Cill Rónáin : reizende fünf
Meilen waren das, ich jedoch brauchte fünfzig
Jahre. Es war ein herrliches Wandern, wilder
Knoblauch an deinen Wegen, Kormorane und
Meer, Geissblatt, sprossendes Farnkraut, Bienen.
Vor dem Haus schickte ich dir einen Luftkuss,
den du vielleicht gar nicht wolltest von mir.
Der Wasserlauf tänzelte hinab zur Küste. Unter
deiner Scheune barer Sandstein, dann mehr,
dein Steinpfad mit kleinen Lilien, der abwärts
führt. Eine Regenwolke sammelt sich auf dem
Rückgrat deiner Insel, dort wo die Häuser den
Hang über Corrúch erklimmen, wo ich in die
Stille hinein schritt und mit Pferden sprach, in
den Schlaf sank in jedem der vierzehntausend
kleinen Felder, mit ihrem liegenden Wasser,
verstreuten Blumen. Dort war es ruhig. Ich hörte
Stille schwärmen. Und flüssige Pfeile prickelten
innen an den Augen : gelb und schmelzend, rot
und violett und blau. Bald muss ich los, raschen
Schritts, um die Fünf-Uhr-Fähre zurück nach
Ros an Mhíl zu erreichen. Und dann den Bus nach
Galway und jenen banalen, kruden Vogel von
Shannon nach Stansted. Nicht dass ich wollte,
Máirtín : viel lieber möchte ich bleiben. Ich liess
meinen Körper unter ein verkehrtes Korbboot
gleiten, seinen blau geteerten Rumpf, oben der
Himmel. Jetzt wird es Zeit zu gehen, noch ein-
mal schicke ich dir einen Kuss zu, auch wenn du
den gar nicht willst : dafür bin ich gekommen,
für diese Worte, die Steinschläfer, Sprache, die
etwas gilt, Sprache die «ja» sagen kann. Und
für das Anschwellen wirklicher Zeit gegen Ufer
bewohnten Raums.

Listening To Dinu Lipatti Play Bach

I am sitting here listening to Dinu Lipatti playing
Bach, while outside
the evening is going
to grey

I am sitting here, listening in amazement because
a cold girl stands furious in the
middle air
and single notes float
out beyond the place where they should stop
or where they should become
so remote

that all sound would cease, but look : there
is no end to breathing – or no
peace

unless a shudder of the earth, its crust already betrayed by
unlinked, furtive magmas were
to explode on

some surface of our soils
once more

tearing trees from roots and brown veins,
placing rock shards high into
cold air

But I am sitting here listening to Dinu Lipatti play chorales and
partitas of Bach : & all else is illusion
or else a new explosion

Hören wie Dinu Lipatti Bach spielt

Ich sitze da und höre Dinu Lipatti zu wie er Bach spielt
während draussen
der Abend ins Grau
sinkt

Ich sitze da und höre ihm staunend zu, denn
ein kaltes Mädchen steht wütend
frei in der Luft
und einzelne Töne treiben über
die Stelle hinaus, an der sie gewöhnlich enden
oder sich so weit
verlieren

dass alles Klingen erlischt, doch schau : da
ist kein Ende im Atmen – oder kein
Friede

es sei denn die Erde erschauere, die Kruste bereits durch-
brochen von unsichtbar fließendem Magma,
das auf die Erd-

oberfläche irgendwo ausbricht
noch einmal

Bäume entwurzelt und braune Adern zerreisst,
und Felsensplitter hoch hinaus in die
kalte Luft wirft

Da sitze ich nun und höre zu wie Dinu Lipatti Choräle und Par-
titen von Bach spielt : & alles andere scheint bloss
oder bricht neuerdings los

For My Friend, Max Sebald

Tell them I had a wonderful life
—Ludwig Wittgenstein

Two months ago I was
talking to you in the Lithuanian forests : telling you
how old women from out of Druskininkai were walking
the blue floors of those stretched oceans with buckets
of mushrooms and moss

There space is old, trees are tall, memory is pain,
history is full of partisans and a sufi music conjures all
of us to whirl where the stalks of the forest barely sway.
I sensed you there because of the rotting of the music
and I knew you'd care.

Your room still is full of photographs
your realm looked after by trees. You who eschewed all
computer trails have been taken away by a skidding wheel
by black ice or a seizure of the heart, lifelong discourse
and your daughter's hurt

All I can do now is stagger
round my rooms mewling out your name Max, Max :
what will happen to language now, now you are not here
and who is left and how many remain of the anarchists
on the ice-floes of speech

These last weeks I had been
writing you postcards in my head : Max come to Whitechapel.
Come soon. Come and talk. Come and walk. Where are you ?
Why did you ? : but this has become an explosion of words
on the scarp of my pain

Für meinen Freund Max Sebald

Sag ihnen, dass ich ein wunderbares Leben hatte
—Ludwig Wittgenstein

Vor zwei Monaten habe ich in
den Wäldern Litauens zu dir gesprochen : erzählte dir
wie alte Frauen bei Druskininkai die blauen Böden jener
ausgedehnten Meere durchschritten mit Eimern voll
von Pilzen und Moos

Dort ist Raum alt, Bäume sind hoch, Erinnerung
ist Schmerz, die Geschichte voll von Partisanen und eine Sufi-
musik bringt uns alle zum Wirbeln, wo die Stängel des Walds
sich kaum regen. Ich fühlte, du warst da, der zersetzenden
Musik wegen, und dachte, das würde dir gefallen.

Dein Zimmer ist noch voller Fotografien, dein
Reich, das die Bäume behüten. Stets bist du Computerpfaden
ausgewichen, nun hat dich ein schlitterndes Rad fortgenommen
oder Schwarzeis oder ein lebenslang gefürchteter Herzanfall
und deine Tochter ist verletzt

Mir bleibt nur, durch meine Wohnung
zu stolpern und immer deinen Namen zu stammeln Max, Max :
was geschieht nun der Sprache, jetzt wo du fort bist, und wen gibt
es und wieviele bleiben noch von den Anarchisten auf dem
Treibeis der Sprache

Während Wochen schon schrieb ich dir
Postkarten in meinem Kopf : Max, komm nach Whitechapel.
Komm bald. Komm und sprich. Komm zu Fuss. Wo bist du ?
Warum hast du ? : nun kommt daraus die Explosion der
Wörter im Steilhang meines Schmerzes

We'd talked about walking
from my village to yours : cutting a section across the Alps
or a section through a glacier's brain. From Precasaglio
in the Alta Valcamonica to Wertach in the Allgäu.
Now I will do that without you.

Before we met and surely ever since
we've been talking to each other. And even when the other
was not there we'd carry on in monologues to hear. I shall
go on talking to you for as long as my mouth can speak :
or what is the point of language

From where did I come
to this scarred field : you first heard my voice in your car,
you last lost your own voice there : what silence in the water,
what bird-smoke, what rough circle in our language has
brought us back to here ?

Dear friend, what is the use of speech :
I now asking of you questions you can no longer reach –
yet as you drift off to the snow-hole of your hills I hear
you say 'they are ever returning to us, the dead' –
Max, I am listening ...

Wir wollten von meinem Dorf zu
deinem wandern : so einen Schnitt quer durch die Alpen
legen oder einen Schnitt durch das Hirn eines Gletschers. Von
Precasaglio in der Alta Valcamonica nach Wertach im Allgäu.
Nun werde ich ohne dich gehen.

Bevor wir uns trafen und sicher seither
haben wir miteinander gesprochen. Sogar wenn der andere
weg war, fuhren wir fort mit vernehmlichen Monologen. Ich werde
weiter zu dir sprechen, solange mein Mund es kann : was
sonst wäre der Sinn der Sprache

Wie bin ich auf dieses
vernarbte Feld geraten : du hast meine Stimme erstmals im
Auto gehört, deine ging dir dort verloren : welch schweigendes
Wasser, welche Wolke aus Vögeln, welches wilde Kreisen
unserer Sprache hat uns hierher zurückgebracht ?

Lieber Freund, wo liegt der Zweck des Redens :
ich stelle dir nun Fragen, die du nicht länger begreifst – dann
aber, während du zum Schneeloch deiner Hügel hingleitest,
höre ich dich sagen, «sie kehren stets wieder, die Toten» –
Max, ich höre zu ...

Birds Of East London

When you live on the twenty-first floor of a tower
and way past midnight you hear a fracture
of wings and in the morning there's
a collar-dove on your balcony

is that a dream ?

When you live on the twenty-first floor and you get
home just at dawn from a party – or you've
been working at the desk all night, the
desk of words I mean – and the
mist you've travelled
home through

lies

flannelled just beneath
your feet so you cannot see the
ground and yet the whole
sky is king-fissure
blue

from the palest horizon to the most golden baroque

is that also a dream
but is it not also
the most real ... ?

And out of such skies come birds and bombs ...

Vögel in East London

Wenn du im einundzwanzigsten Stock oben wohnst
und hörst weit nach Mitternacht ein Brechen
von Flügeln und am Morgen liegt eine
Halsband-Taube auf dem Balkon

ist das ein Traum ?

Wenn du im einundzwanzigsten Stock wohnst und
im ersten Licht von einem Fest heimkehrst – oder
die ganze Nacht am Schreibtisch gesessen hast,
will sagen am Tisch der Worte – und der
Nebel, durch den du nach Hause
gewandert bist

liegt

wie ein Wollstoff zu deinen
Füssen, so dass du den Boden nicht mehr
sehen kannst, und doch klafft der
ganze Himmel Eisvogel-
blau

vom bleichsten Horizont zum allergoldensten Barock

ist auch das ein Traum
oder ist das nicht auch
das Allerwirklichste ... ?

Und aus solchen Sphären kommen Vögel und Bomben ...

When you live on the twenty-first floor and you
notice that in a crack in the cladding
a few metres down a kestrel
has made her nest

and when you see that kestrel
pinioned on its wing-bone, sitting at ease in
the middle air, shifting sideways on sudden
gusts – its unperplexed ligaments
ready to dive it through
skies of reality

through torn webs of nerves

and when you catch
the feather of the collar dove
floating past your eye ...

is that not a dream and
is life only a dream ?

Or when you see Arctic geese flying beneath your feet
toward the landing stage on the Camargue just
as once you saw them flying

between the mountain and the sea – in
the gap between sight and nothing
right there above your head –
on those far islands of
mica schist

way out west and beyond
the times of
clearance

is that only a dream or does life
just dream us ?

Wenn du im einundzwanzigsten Stock wohnst und be-
merkst, dass in einer Spalte der Verkleidung ein
paar Meter weiter unten ein Turm-
falke sein Nest gebaut hat

Und wenn du diesen Falken auf
seinem Fluggestell ausschwingen siehst, wie er
entspannt mitten in der Luft ruht, seitwärts driftet auf
plötzlichen Böen – die einzeln beweglichen Ligamente
bereit für ein Abtauchen durch Sphären
der Wirklichkeit

durch die zerrissenen Netze der Nerven

und wenn du die
Feder der Halsband-Taube erwischst, die an
deinen Augen vorüberschwebt ...

ist das nicht ein Traum und
ist Leben nichts als ein Traum ?

Oder du siehst die Polargänse unter deinen Füßen fliegen
auf den Landesteg in der Camargue zu, gerade
wie du sie einmal fliegen sahst

zwischen dem Berg und dem Meer – in der Lücke
zwischen Sichtbarem und Nichts
genau dort über deinem Kopf –
bei jenen fernen Inseln aus
Glimmerschiefer

weit im Westen und jenseits
der Zeiten der
Vertreibung

ist das bloss ein Traum oder träumt
das Leben uns bloss ?

And language has broken down, language has been
bandaged – like the sun, like the bandaged
sun – and we speak in chunks
of betrayal words

when language itself
has become ...

Or when at eye level from your balcony you see black
darting swifts mewing in the fine drizzle or
turning their sleek bodies in the
sun as they bite tiny insects
simply for sustenance

is this just a dream of
life ?

Or the gannet that plunges down cliffs of light
(as a broke lift might through shafts of
darkness) and breaks the surface
of the curdled water leaving
its tongue's graffiti on
the shoal beneath

having picked out just one fish
for its gizzard and gullet

O my toppled sanity : O my maytime
market : O my bridge of
dreams

Or as a cormorant might
fly straight into the sun
and either it will crinkle and fizz in the black
heats – or else it will heal the sun's
bandaged
wound :

Und Sprache brach zusammen, Sprache wurde ein-
bandagiert – wie die Sonne, wie die bandagierte
Sonne – und wir reden gebrochen
mit Worten des Verrats

selbst die Sprache
wurde da zu ...

Oder wenn du auf der Höhe deines Balkons Mauersegler
pfeilen siehst, die im Nieselregen schreien oder ihren
schlanken Rumpf im Sonnenlicht wenden
winzige Fliegen schnappend
schlicht als Nahrung

ist das nichts als ein Traum vom
Leben ?

Oder der Basstölpel, der den Klippen des Lichts
entlang abstürzt (wie ein kaputter Lift durch
Schächte ins Dunkel) und die Fläche des
erstarrten Wassers durchbricht, sein
Zungen-Graffito zurücklassend
im Schwarm darunter

einen einzigen Fisch hat er herausgepickt
für seinen Magen und Schlund

O mein umgekippter Verstand : O mein Maien-
markt : O meine Brücke aus
Träumen

Oder wie ein Kormoran geradewegs
in die Sonne hinein fliegen könnte
und entweder es knistert und zischt in der schwarzen
Hitze – oder aber die einbandagierte Wunde
der Sonne
wird heilen :

(for this is what birds know that we
no longer know)

Or the stormy petrel sleeping on the heave of
the ocean, giving countenance to
the wreck and the wrack
waiting for the spigot or flag
of seaweed or the onrush of
maritime tide

One time in my house on the burnt island a wren
deep-dived by a buzzard fled in through
my blue open door but then was as
bone burst by human space
as by any beak or claw

though I spoke to it
in bird words from the piece of
my hearth

and I cupped it in my hands
until off it flew

but my mind is a burnt island : as is
everyone's in this bruised
world, or in this world
of bruised minds

and is everyone just a
dream?

When you live on the twenty-first floor and the old
Ukrainian man twelve floors down keeps
racing pigeons on his balcony -
Popa he is called
and he sings
lullabies
in

(denn das ist es, was Vögel können
und wir nicht mehr)

Oder der Sturmvogel, der auf der Bewegung des
Ozeans schläft, dem Wrack und dem
Tang Halt gibt
wartend auf den Stopfen oder
Wedel aus Seegras oder den Ansturm
der Flut

Eines Tages kam auf der abgebrannten Insel ein Zaun-
könig, abgetaucht auf der Flucht vor einem Bussard,
durch die blaue offene Tür in mein Haus und
war dann vom Raum des Menschen
genauso knochenversprengt wie
von Schnabel oder Kralle

obwohl ich zu ihm sprach
in Vogelworten vom Ofensitz
aus

und ihn mit meinen Händen behütete
bis er wegflog

jedoch mein Denken ist eine abgebrannte Insel : und das
gilt für jedermann in dieser lädierten Welt,
oder in dieser Welt des
lädierten Denkens

und ist denn jedermann bloss
ein Traum ?

Wenn du im einundzwanzigsten Stock wohnst und
der alte Ukrainer zwölf Stockwerke unter dir
auf seinem Balkon Brieftauben hält -
Popa heisst er und
singt Wiegen-
lieder
im

the sunlit pub on Cable Street
the pub that is not yet
shut down -

and

his pigeons fly in wide arcs, in circles
from his balcony, but they cannot
return him to the village
near L'vov (shhh
shhh :

this is his mother hugging him close
shielding his eyes, clasping him
to her body lest he moan
or whimper when
the partisans
piss in

the bushes she's hiding him in as
they pass through the
burnt village :

shhh ... shhh)

Is this then just a dream ?

Or when you live on the twenty-first floor and
you see two cormorants sweeping the sky
making wide arcs of their own choice
bargaining with no-one and
compromising nothing :

what in their bone structure
do they know that we will never
know ?

sonnenhellen Pub an der Cable Street
im Pub, das noch nicht
geschlossen wurde -

und

seine Tauben fliegen weite Bögen und Kreise von
seinem Balkon aus, aber sie können ihn
nicht zu seinem Dorf bei L'vov
zurückbringen (schh
schh :

das ist seine Mutter, die ihn eng umschlungen hält
seine Augen abschirmt, ihn an ihren Körper
drückt damit er nicht stöhnt oder
wimmert wenn die
Partisanen ins
Gebüsch

pissen wo sie ihn versteckt hält solange
die Männer das verbrannte
Dorf passieren :

schh ... schh)

Ist das denn bloss ein Traum ?

Oder wenn du im einundzwanzigsten Stock wohnst und
zwei Kormorane über den Himmel fegen siehst
in weiten Bögen nach eigener Wahl ohne
mit jemandem zu verhandeln oder
Kompromisse einzugehen :

was haben sie für ein Wissen in ihrem
Knochenbau, das wir niemals haben
können ?

what in the balance between
their gut and their eye ?

and suddenly from sweeping the city they
streak and scud from one
sector of the city to
another

from one skerry to the
burning sun

(corporations named cars after animals, governments
named bombs after birds)

even language has its final answer, even
words fail – or else soar –
where we most need them

even birds fly in East London
coming from Iceland or the Western Isles
going to Morocco or Algeria or
south of the Sahara ...

Is this just a dream ?
this
parliament of birds, these
migrations

this flight path of swifts and swallows
this discourse on the sanities
this journey to be made
across breath

or

the stupidity of ever drawing
boundaries

was im Zusammenspiel zwischen
ihren Eingeweiden und Augen ?

und plötzlich fegen sie nicht mehr über die Stadt
sondern jagen und schiessen von
einem Stadtteil zum
andern

von einer Schäre hinauf zur
brennenden Sonne

(Konzerne haben Autos nach Tieren benannt und
Regierungen Bomben nach Vögeln)

sogar die Sprache kommt zur letzten Antwort, sogar Wörter
versagen – oder schwingen sich ganz nach oben –
wo wir sie am meisten brauchen

sogar Vögel aus Island oder von den
Äusseren Hebriden fliegen über East London, unterwegs
nach Marokko, Algerien oder in den
Süden der Sahara ...

Ist das bloss ein Traum ?
dieses
Parlament der Vögel, diese
Vogelzüge

dieser Flugweg der Mauersegler und Schwalben
dieses Reden über Vernünftiges
diese Reise, möglich nur
über den Atem

oder

die Dummheit, jemals Grenzen
zu ziehen

When you live on the twenty-first floor and down
there in the paved market you can see
your friends ...

Wenn du im einundzwanzigsten Stock wohnst und
unten auf der Strasse im Markttreiben deine
Freunde erkennst ...

Ancient Sunlight

I've never driven a car but no-one ever's given me
praise for that

I decided at age eighteen not to take the driver's seat
but to see the city with my feet

I walk to work through a local map of trees, one that
I concocted as I please

I rub local borough workers up wrong ways, double
checking how they plant their trees

I walk to work : as I walk the rhythms of words form
somewhere inside me

Then they well up – as do intuitions – and jerk free :
that also is why I walk to work

Whenever I can I walk on the camber of roads : even
in the congestion of London town

This is possible because great tracts of shining words
glint in the sun & shed shards

Many things are possible in the city : baking bread,
growing vegetables, raising kids

You wouldn't think these things possible & yet they
still are !

I walk along pavements carrying sun-banners made
by wee lads in school yards

I walk along the pavements carrying with me words
spoken by tired schizophrenic old men

Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit

Ich habe nie ein Auto gesteuert, aber keiner hat mich je
dafür gelobt

Ich entschied mich mit achtzehn, statt auf den Fahrersitz
zu steigen, die Stadt mit meinen Füßen zu sehen

Zur Arbeit gehe ich durch ein lokales Netz von Bäumen,
von mir ausgeheckt wie 's mir beliebt

Den Arbeitern im Bezirk gehe ich gegen den Strich, denn
ich prüfe nach, wie sie die Bäume pflanzen

Ich gehe zu Fuss zur Arbeit : beim Gehen formen sich
irgendwo Rhythmen und Wörter in mir

Dann quellen sie hervor – wie Intuition – und werden frei
mit einem Ruck : auch darum gehe ich zu Fuss

Wann immer ich kann, gehe ich auf der Wölbung der
Strassen : sogar im verstopften London Town

Das wird möglich, weil grosse Strecken strahlender Wörter
in der Sonne glitzern & zersplittern

Viele Dinge sind möglich in der Grossstadt: Brot backen,
Gemüse pflanzen, Kinder aufziehen

Man glaubt nicht, dass diese Dinge möglich seien & doch
sind sie es nach wie vor !

Ich folge Gehwegen mit Sonnenbannern unter dem Arm,
bemalt von kleinen Kerlen in Schulhöfen

Ich folge den Gehwegen und trage Worte mit mir, die müde
schizophrene alte Männer gesprochen haben

I walk along the pavements carrying the burden &
sad retinue of quotidian dementias

And I unfurl those banners of gyres & colour as I
walk across main roads

I furl & unfurl my words : I make poems as I walk
I walk to work with words

My carbon footprint is very low, but my feet have
printed poems throughout these roads

I walk the streets of Whitechapel with the blue bag
of language slung across my breast

I walk the streets of Stepney talking just as I please
but even so only silence rises

I go into pubs and cafés and no-one asks me to sing
I walk to the door & a poem comes in

Ancient sunlight plunges through my veins. What I
know of language is harsh as rock.

Ancient sunlight plunges through my veins from the
constricted depths of dead dockers' docks

Ancient sunlight plunges to the gyp of my stomach
& larded words rise through my gullet

Five thousand years ago a mushroom-gizzarded man
climbed inside a glacier

Only now – just a few moments back – out he came !
I walk as his shadow : he is mine

To breathe he staggers through our century drunk
on ancient sunlight-wine : ancient sunlight

Is how he has given me song, ancient sunlight is
where poetry & language come from.

Ich folge den Gehwegen und trage die Bürde & den traurigen
Schweif des täglichen Schwachsinn

Und entrolle die Banner mit ihren Kreiseln & Farben beim
Queren der grossen Achsen

Ich rolle & entrolle meine Wörter : mache beim Gehen
Gedichte, gehe mit Wörtern zur Arbeit

Mein Fussabdruck durch CO₂ ist sehr gering, doch überall
haben meine Füsse dem Asphalt Gedichte aufgedruckt

Ich gehe durch die Strassen von Whitechapel, über die Brust
die blaue Tasche der Sprache gehängt

Ich gehe durch die Strassen von Stepney und rede wie es mir
gefällt, aber auch so macht sich nur Schweigen breit

Ich besuche Pubs und Cafés und niemand bittet mich zu
singen. Ich gehe zur Tür & ein Gedicht tritt ein

Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit schiesst durch meine Adern. Was
ich von Sprache weiss, ist schroff wie Fels.

Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit schiesst durch meine Adern aus
den engen Tiefen der Docks toter Docker

Sonnenlicht aus alter Zeit fällt in meinen gereizten Magen
& Speck-Wörter kommen hoch in meinem Schlund

Fünftausend Jahre früher stieg ein Mann mit Pilzen im
Bauch in einen Gletscher hinein

Erst jetzt – vor wenigen Augenblicken – kam er heraus !
Ich gehe als sein Schatten : er ist mein

Atem holend wankt er durch unsere Zeit, betrunken von
altem Sonnenlicht-Wein : Sonnenlicht aus

Alter Zeit, damit gab er mir Gesang, aus altem Sonnenlicht
kommen Dichtung & Sprache her.

you first heard my voice in your car, you last lost your own voice there – W. G. 'Max' Sebald died near Norwich in his car on December 14th, 2001, it is thought in consequence of a sudden heart attack that led to his car veering off from its lane into the path of an oncoming lorry. In his account of their friendship and exchange, Stephen Watts wrote about the first, much earlier instance of slippage: 'It turned out that he had heard me reading a poem of mine on Radio 3, sometime in December 1983' and 'Max ... had been driving home from his work at UEA with the music channel on in his car, and he said that my poem had "arrested" him so that momentarily he had forgotten he was driving and the car had started slipping across the road.' – Stephen Watts, 'Afterword: Max Sebald: A Reminiscence', *Saturn's Moons. W. G. Sebald – A Handbook*. ed. Jo Catling and Richard Hibbitt (Cambridge: Legenda, 2011), pp. 299–307, followed by the poem 'For My Friend, Max Sebald'.

'they are ever returning to us, the dead' – W. G. Sebald, 'Dr Henry Selwyn', in *The Emigrants*, tr. Michael Hulse (London: The Harvill Press, 1996), p. 23: 'And so they are ever returning to us, the dead. At times they come back from the ice more than seven decades later and are found at the edge of the moraine, a few polished bones and a pair of hobnailed boots.'

Birds Of East London

the times of clearance – A reference to the 'Highland Clearances' in Scotland when from about 1750 until 1850 or later, landlords (often absentee & aristocratic) forcibly & violently cleared their lands of tenants to put sheep in their place. It is one of the most disgraceful episodes in recent UK history, and resulted in whole communities being at very short notice (a few hours, if that) evicted from their homes & put on ships for North America, Canada etc. Very brutal, very political violence. Most of those cleared would have been speakers of Gaelic, not of English: the scars left on Gaelic culture have not been erased, are still there really & British history has never taken proper responsibility. (SW)

Old Women Of My Childhoods

the city of china and canals – My aunt lived in Stoke-on-Trent which was a centre of high quality pottery production and was known as 'The Potteries'. (SW)

My grandmother ... Losing two babies at the border post – My grandmother was held up at the border post between Switzerland and Italy at Tirano sometime around/during WW1 & her twin babies (my mother's brothers) caught German Measles and died, partly due to the bureaucracy of border posts at a time of war. (SW)

Western Isles – The Outer Hebrides (Scottish Gaelic: Na h-Eileanan Siar, 'western isles'), is the furthestmost chain of islands off the west coast of mainland Scotland.

Brick Lane Mela Poem

Brick Lane Mela – This annual Mela (Sanskrit 'assembly; gathering', a term used throughout South-Asia) started in 1997 as a celebration based in Allen Gardens and Brick Lane. It became one of the largest celebrations of the Bengali Spring New Year outside of Bangladesh, and now takes place in the larger space of Weavers Fields in Bethnal Green to accommodate more people and bigger music groups. The poem was written in 2002 when it was still mostly based in Brick Lane. (SW)

Beani Bazar – Beanibazar, a place in Sylhet where a large number of Bangladeshis living in Tower Hamlets originate from.

Banglatown C&C – Cash and carry wholesaler located at 67–77 Hanbury Street.

Kafka's Dora – Dora Diamant (1898–1952). She met Franz Kafka when they were both at a summer resort on the Baltic Sea in 1923. In 1940 she came to the United Kingdom and following the war lived in London where she worked closely with Avrom Stencl and 'Friends of Yiddish', organising plays and poetry readings in Whitechapel to foster the Yiddish language and to keep its culture alive. For a few years she ran a café in Brick Lane. Kathi Diamant (relation unknown) has researched her life and published the book *Kafka's Last Love – The Mystery Of Dora Diamant* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

nailed to the moon – The 'CH N. Katz' shop for 'string, twine cord & paper bags' at 92 Brick Lane existed until the 1990s. The 'moon' might refer to the white, crescent-shaped arch above its window. See the 1988 photograph by Alan Dein reproduced in Lichtenstein's *On Brick Lane*, p. 54.

Dieses Gedicht hab ich abgestimmt auf die Zahl seiner Jahre – Das 2003 geschriebene Gedicht umfasste nach der letzten, allein dastehenden Zeile zufällig neunundfünfzig und eine halbe Doppelzeilen, entsprechend dem damaligen Alter von David Silver. (SW)

Für meinen Freund Max Sebald

Sag ihnen, dass ich ein wunderbares Leben hatte – Nach Norman Malcolm sollen dies Wittgensteins letzte Worte gewesen sein, gedacht für seine nächsten Freunde, die vorhatten, ihn am folgenden Tag zu besuchen.

du hast meine Stimme erstmals im Auto gehört, deine ging dir dort verloren – W. G. «Max» Sebald verstarb am 14. Dezember 2001 bei Norwich, als sein Auto von der Spur abkam und mit einem Lastwagen kollidierte, wohl nachdem Sebald eine Herzattacke erlitten hatte. In seinem Rückblick auf ihre Freundschaft und ihren Austausch schrieb Stephen Watts über den ersten, viel früheren Verlust der Kontrolle: «Er erzählte, dass er mich auf BBC Radio 3 gehört hatte, als ich dort irgendwann im Dezember 1983 ein Gedicht von mir las» und «Max ... war auf dem Heimweg von der UEA (University of East Anglia) und hörte im Auto den Musikkanal. Er sagte, mein Gedicht habe ihn derart 'gepackt', dass er für kurze Zeit vergessen habe zu steuern und das Auto begonnen habe, quer über die Strasse zu rutschen.» («Max Sebald: A Reminiscence», 2011)

«sie kehren stets wieder, die Toten» – W. G. Sebald, «Dr. Henry Selwyn», in *Die Ausgewanderten* (München: Hanser, 2013), S. 36–37: «So also kehren sie wieder, die Toten. Manchmal nach mehr als sieben Jahrzehnten kommen sie heraus aus dem Eis und liegen am Rand der Moräne, ein Häufchen geschliffener Knochen und ein Paar genagelter Schuhe.»

Vögel in East London

Zeiten der Vertreibung – Ein Verweis auf die zwangsweisen und gewaltsamen *Highland Clearances* («Räumung des Hochlands», im Gälischen *Fuadach nan Gàidheal*, «Vertreibung der Gälischsprachigen») in Schottland, ab ungefähr 1750 und bis 1850 oder noch länger, durch die (meist nicht ortsansässigen, aristokratischen) Gutsherren zugunsten der Einführung der Schafzucht. Es ist eine der schändlichsten Episoden der jüngeren britischen Geschichte, die zu sehr kurzfristigen

Räumungen (innert Stunden bestenfalls) ganzer Gemeinden führte, wo die Menschen aus ihren Häusern geworfen und auf Schiffe nach Nordamerika, Kanada usw. gesetzt wurden. Sehr brutale, sehr politische Gewalt. Die meisten, die vertrieben wurden, sprachen gälisch und nicht englisch: die Narben, die in der gälischen Kultur hinterlassen wurden, sind nicht verschwunden, sie sind immer noch vorhanden, und die britische Geschichtsschreibung hat nie richtig Verantwortung dafür übernommen.

Alte Frauen meiner Kindheiten

Stadt des Porzellans und der Kanäle – Meine Tante lebte in Stoke-on-Trent. Die Stadt war das Zentrum einer qualitativ hochstehenden Keramikherstellung und wurde auch *The Potteries* genannt. (SW)

Meine Grossmutter ... verlor zwei Säuglinge beim Grenzposten – Meine Grossmutter wurde um die Zeit des ersten Weltkriegs am Grenzposten von Tirano zwischen der Schweiz und Italien aufgehalten. Ihre Zwillingssöhne (die Brüder meiner Mutter) erkrankten dort an den Röteln und starben, teilweise wegen der Bürokratie von Grenzposten in Zeiten des Kriegs. (SW)

Western Isles – Die Äusseren Hebriden (schottisch-gälisch *Na h-Eileanan Siar*, «Die westlichen Inseln»), die äusserste Inselgruppe vor der Westküste Schottlands.

Gedicht zur Brick Lane Mela

Brick Lane Mela – Diese Mela (Sanskrit «Zusammenkunft, Versammlung» – der Begriff wird im ganzen südlichen Asien verwendet) begann 1997 als jährlich stattfindendes Fest in den Allen Gardens und der Brick Lane. Sie entwickelte sich zu einer der grössten Feiern des im Frühjahr stattfindenden bengalischen Neujahrs ausserhalb Bangladeschs. Heute findet sie auf der grösseren Fläche der Weavers Fields in Bethnal Green statt, um mehr Besuchern und grösseren Musikgruppen Platz zu bieten. Das Gedicht wurde 2002 geschrieben, als die Mela noch vor allem in der Brick Lane stattfand. (SW)

Beani Bazar – Beanibazar, eine Stadt in Sylhet, aus der viele der im Tower Hamlets ansässigen Bangladescher herkommen.

Banglatown C&C – Grosshandelsgeschäft an der 67–77 Hanbury Street.

Stephen Watts

Stephen Watts was born in London in 1952. His father's family came from Stoke-on-Trent, his mother's from the Swiss-Italian Alps. From 1970 he briefly studied History, then Mathematics and Philosophy at Oxford University. Between 1971 and 1974 he lived on North Uist working as a shepherd. This is where he started to write poetry. He thus has cultural roots in the Alta Valcamonica and in Scotland. Since 1976 he has been living in Whitechapel in the East End of London.

He has published seven books of poetry – *The Lava's Curl* (Grimaldi Press, 1990), *Gramsci & Caruso* (Periplum, 2004, with Czech translation by Petr Mikeš, reissued by Mille Gru, 2014, with Italian translation by Cristina Viti), *The Blue Bag* (Aark Arts, 2004), *Mountain Language / Lingua di montagna* (2008) and *Journey Across Breath / Tragitto nel respiro* (2011, both Hearing Eye, with Italian translations by Cristina Viti), *Ancient Sunlight* (Enitharmon, 2014), and *Republic of Dogs / Republic of Birds* (Test Centre, 2016) – and edited several anthologies – *Houses & Fish. A book of drawings with writing by 4 & 5 year olds* (Parrot Press, 1991), *Voices of Conscience* (an international anthology of censored poets, Iron Press, 1995), *Mother Tongues* (a special issue of Modern Poetry in Translation, 2001) and *Music While Drowning* (an anthology of German Expressionist poems that accompanied an exhibition at the Tate Modern in London, Tate Publishing, 2003).

His numerous translations and co-translations include books of modern Kurdish, Georgian and British Bangladeshi poetry as well as volumes by A. N. Stencl, Meta Kušar, Amarjit Chandan, Adnan al-Sayegh, Golan Haji and Ziba Karbassi (from Yiddish, Slovenian, Punjabi, Arabic, Persian). He has curated bilingual readings at several exhibitions (including those dedicated to Emil Nolde, Joan Miró, Arshile Gorky, Renato Guttuso and Francisco Toledo). He has worked in schools and hospitals as a writer on issues of well-being and creativity.

The Republics, a film by Huw Wahl based on Stephen Watts' book *Republic Of Dogs / Republic Of Birds*, which is read by the poet himself in the film, was released in 2020.

He has been compiling an ongoing bibliography of 20th and 21st century poetry in English translation since 1980.

Stephen Watts wurde 1952 in London geboren. Die Familie seines Vaters stammte aus Stoke-on-Trent, die seiner Mutter aus den italienischen und schweizerisch-italienischen Alpen. Ab 1970 studierte Watts kurze Zeit Geschichte, dann Mathematik und Philosophie in Oxford. Zwischen 1971 und 1974 lebte er auf North Uist und arbeitete als Schafhirt. Dort begann er, Gedichte zu schreiben. So hat er kulturelle Wurzeln in der Alta Valcamonica und in Schottland. Seit 1976 lebt er in Whitechapel, im East End von London.

Er hat sieben Gedichtbände veröffentlicht: *The Lava's Curl* (Grimaldi Press, 1990), *Gramsci & Caruso* (Periplum, 2004, mit tschechischer Übersetzung von Petr Mikeš, neu aufgelegt von Mille Gru, 2014, mit italienischer Übersetzung von Cristina Viti), *The Blue Bag* (Aark Arts, 2004), *Mountain Language / Lingua di montagna* und *Journey Across Breath / Tragitto nel respiro* (2008 bzw. 2011; beide Hearing Eye, mit italienischen Übersetzungen von Cristina Viti), *Ancient Sunlight* (Enitharmon, 2014) und *Republic of Dogs / Republic of Birds* (Test Centre, 2016) sowie mehrere Anthologien: *Houses & Fish. A book of drawings with writing by 4 & 5 year olds* (Parrot Press, 1991), *Voices of Conscience* (eine internationale Anthologie zensierter Dichter, Iron Press, 1995), *Mother Tongues* (eine Sonderausgabe von Modern Poetry in Translation, 2001) und *Music While Drowning* (eine Anthologie von Gedichten des deutschen Expressionismus zu einer Ausstellung in der Tate Modern in London, Tate Publishing, 2003).

Zu seinen zahlreichen Übersetzungen und Co-Übersetzungen gehören Bücher der modernen kurdischen, georgischen und britisch-bangladeschischen Dichtung sowie Bände von A. N. Stencl, Meta Kušar, Amarjit Chandan, Adnan al-Sayegh, Golan Haji und Ziba Karbassi (aus dem Jiddischen, Slowenischen, Pandshabischen, Arabischen, Persischen). Er hat zweisprachige Lesungen in Ausstellungen präsentiert (u. a. zu Emil Nolde, Joan Miró, Arshile Gorky, Renato Guttuso und Francisco Toledo). In Schulen und Spitälern hat er Ateliers zum persönlichen Wohlergehen und Ausdruck geleitet.

The Republics, ein Film von Huw Wahl zu Stephen Watts' Text *Republic Of Dogs / Republic Of Birds*, der im Film vom Dichter selbst gelesen wird, wurde 2020 veröffentlicht.

Seit 1980 arbeitet er an einer fortlaufenden Bibliographie der weltweiten Dichtung des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts in englischer Übersetzung.

Books of Poetry / Gedichtbände

- *The Lava's Curl* (Walsden: The Grimaldi Press, 1990).
- *Gramsci & Caruso* (Olomouc: Periplum, 2004), with Czech translation by/ mit tschechischer Übersetzung von Petr Mikeš.
- *The Blue Bag* (London/New Delhi/Toronto: Aark Arts, 2005).
- *Mountain Language/Lingua di montagna* (2008) and/ und *Journey Across Breath/ Tragitto nel respiro* (2011, both/ beide London: Hearing Eye), with Italian translations by/ mit italienischen Übersetzungen von Cristina Viti.
- *Gramsci & Caruso* (Monza: Mille Gru, 2014), with Italian translation by/ mit italienischen Übersetzungen von Cristina Viti.
- *Ancient Sunlight* (London: Enitharmon, 2014).
- *Republic of Dogs/Republic of Birds* (London: Test Centre, 2016).

Contributions / Textbeiträge

- 'Max Sebald: A Reminiscence', in *Saturn's Moons. W. G. Sebald – A Handbook*, ed./ Hrsg. Jo Catling and/ und Richard Hibbitt (Cambridge: Legenda, 2011), pp./S. 299–307. Followed by Stephen Watts' poem/ Gefolgt von Stephen Watts' Gedicht 'For my Friend, Max Sebald', pp./S. 309–310.

Translations and co-translations / Übersetzungen und Co-Übersetzungen

- *Modern Kurdish Poetry*, trans. with/ übersetzt zusammen mit Kamal Mirawdeli (University Of Uppsala Press, 2006).
- Avrom Nokhem Stencl, *All My Young Years: Yiddish Poetry from Weimar Germany*, Yiddish-English edition/ Jiddisch-englische Ausgabe, trans./ übersetzt von Haike Beruriah Wiegand and/ und Stephen Watts, intro./ Einführung Heather Valencia (Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 2007).
- Meta Kušar, *Ljubljana*, trans. from Slovenian with/ übersetzt aus dem Slowenischen mit Ana Jelnikar (Todmorden: Arc Publications, 2009).
- Ziba Karbassi, *Collage Poems* (London: Exiled Writers Ink, 2009).
- Adnan al-Sayegh, *The Deleted Part* (London: Exiled Writers Ink, 2009).
- Amarjit Chandan, *Sonata For Four Hands*, ed. and trans. from Punjabi with the poet and others/ hrsg. und aus dem Pandschabischen übersetzt mit dem Dichter und weiteren Übersetzern (Todmorden: Arc Publications, 2010).

- Ziba Karbassi, *Poems/Poesie*, trans. from Persian into English by/ aus dem Persischen ins Englische übersetzt von Stephen Watts and into Italian by/ und ins Italienische von Cristina Viti (Monza: Mille Gru, 2011).
- Contributions to/ Beiträge zu 'Romanian Supplement', *Modern Poetry in Translation*, No./ Nr. 2, 2013, and/ und 'Iranian Supplement', MPT, No./ Nr. 2, 2015.
- Adnan al-Sayegh, *Pages From The Biography Of An Exile*, trans. from Arabic with/ aus dem Arabischen übersetzt zusammen mit Marga Burgui-Artajo (Todmorden: Arc Publications, 2016).
- *Six Georgian Poets* (Rati Amaglobeli, Shota Iatashvili, Gaga Nakhutsrishvili, Lela Samniashvili, Maya Sarishvili and Irakli Charkviani). Georgian-English edition/ Georgisch-englische Ausgabe, ed./ Hrsg. Gaga Lomidze, trans./ Übers. Alexandra Büchler, Nia Davies, Donald Rayfield, Adham Smart, Stephen Watts (some co-translations with/ zum Teil zusammen mit Lela Samniashvili or/ bzw. Lela Dumbadze), with/ mit Davit Gabunia (Todmorden: Arc Publications, 2016).
- *British Bangladeshi Poetry: An Anthology*, co-edited with/ hrsg. zusammen mit Shamim Azad (Dhaka: Agamee Prakashani, 2017).
- Golan Haji, *A Tree Whose Name I Don't Know*, trans. from Arabic with the poet/ aus dem Arabischen übers. gemeinsam mit dem Dichter (New York: A Midsummer Night's Press, 2017).
- Ziba Karbassi: *Lemon Sun*, trans. from Persian with the poet/ aus dem Persischen übers. gemeinsam mit der Dichterin (Todmorden: Arc Publications, 2021).

As editor or co-editor / Als Herausgeber oder Mitherausgeber

- *Houses & Fish. A book of drawings with writing by 4 & 5 year olds* (London: Parrot Press, 1991).
- *Voices of Conscience. Poetry from Oppression*, ed. with/ hrsg. zusammen mit Hume Cronyn and/ und Richard McKane (Cullercoats: Iron Press, 1995).
- *Mother Tongues. Non English-Language Poetry in England*, Issue No./ Ausg. Nr. 17 of/ von *Modern Poetry in Translation* (London: King's College, 2001).
- *Music While Drowning. German Expressionist Poems*, ed. with/ hrsg. zusammen mit David Miller (London: Tate Publishing, 2003).

Hannes Schüpbach

(b. 1965 in Winterthur, Switzerland) is a visual artist. His recent work has mainly involved 16mm silent films, which are shown in museums as well as at major film festivals. Several of his films, among them *Erzählung* (2007) *L'Atelier* (2007), the trilogy *Spin / Verso / Contour* (2011), *Instants* (2012), and *Essais* (2020), deal with the process of artistic creation. With his translation of 19 poems by Stephen Watts and the installation *Explosion of Words*, dedicated to Watts and his oeuvre, he continues his 'reading' of fellow artists.

(*1965 in Winterthur, Schweiz) ist bildender Künstler. In neuster Zeit umfasst sein Werk vor allem Filme in 16mm ohne Ton, die sowohl in Museen wie auch an den grossen Filmfestivals gezeigt werden. Mehrere seiner Filme, so *Erzählung* (2007), *L'Atelier* (2007), die Trilogie *Spin / Verso / Contour* (2011), *Instants* (2012) und *Essais* (2020) befassen sich mit dem künstlerischen Prozess als solchem. Mit seiner Übersetzung der 19 Gedichte von Stephen Watts und der Watts gewidmeten Installation *Explosion of Words*, setzt er seine «Lektüre» anderer Künstler fort.

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