

## Contributors

**Abdullah Alqaseer** was born in Salamiyah, Syria, and has published a number of essays as well as a short story collection, *Nackt im AlAb-basseen*, and a novel, *Gebrauchte Alpträume*. He now lives in Halle, Germany, and continues to write. “A Lie Named Germany” was translated by Mustafa Al-Slaiman for *Weiter Schreiben (Writing On)*, a project that seeks to provide a platform for authors originally from countries that are currently plagued by war or other crises, enabling them to continue writing, publishing, and finding readers for their work. Thus, *Weiter Schreiben* typically presents texts in multiple languages—in this case Arabic and German—enabling different points of linguistic entry.

**Lauren Beck** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. Her dissertation project examines temporal aesthetics and experiences in contemporary (post-)socialist fiction, focusing particularly on memory exchange between generations of women. Her past research has addressed visual culture and photography, modernism, German-language Soviet wartime propaganda, North American Finns in Soviet Karelia, Russian migration to Berlin in the 1920s, and other topics.

**Elisabeth Fertig** is a writer, translator, and PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan, where her research focuses on the intersection of experimental poetics and radio drama in English and German. Additional research areas include sound studies, media theory, audio storytelling, feminist and queer theory, contemporary poetics, critical translation studies, and autotheory. She earned her BA in English and German from Oberlin College and currently hosts a weekly radio show on WCBN-FM, Ann Arbor’s freeform community radio station. Previously, Elisabeth served two years on *Absinthe*’s managing editorial team.

*Ivan Parra Garcia* is a fiction writer, translator, and third-year PhD student in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan. His academic interests relate to the intersections of theory and experience and philosophy and literature. He received an MFA in Spanish Creative Writing at the University of Iowa. His collection of short stories, titled *Texarkana*, was published by Sudaquia Editores (New York) in 2021.

**Catalin Dorian Florescu** was born in Timișoara, Romania, and has been living in Switzerland since 1982. “In the Navel of the World,” initially published in 2001, follows an unnamed narrator’s reminiscences about his journey from Romania to Switzerland—one that is notably similar to Florescu’s own experience. Considering questions of nostalgia, belonging, translation, and more, “In the Navel of the World” is just the very beginning of Florescu’s wider oeuvre. Since its publication, Florescu has authored six novels, a collection of short stories, and numerous essays. Among them are *Der Mann, der das Glück bringt* (The man who brings happiness, 2016) and “Ich muss Deutschland” (I must Germany, 2017), the latter of which was adapted for the stage in 2020. He has received literary prizes such as the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize (2002), the Swiss Literature Prize (2011), and the Andreas Gryphius Literature Prize (2018), as well as many others.

**Marina Frenk** was born 1986 in Chișinău, Moldova, and immigrated to Germany in 1993. She studied acting at the Folkwang Academy in Essen and played from 2008 to 2015 in permanent engagements at subsequently held engagements in the company of the Bochum Theatre, the Centraltheater Leipzig, the Cologne Theatre, and Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin, among others. She made her cinema debut in *Totem* by Jessica Krummacher. She was the lead singer of the folk-gypsy band Kapelsky and the electro-dance band The Real Baba Dunyah. Her debut novel, *ewig her und gar nicht wahr* (long ago but not really true), was published in 2020.

**Lena Grimm** is a third-year PhD student at the University of Michigan’s Department of Comparative Literature. Her work currently focuses on the reception and translation of ancient Greek tragedy in contemporary German and English language contexts. Having initially encountered the Swiss variety of the language through

her family, she has long been interested in the plurality of Germans that exist within the Germanophone world.

**Barbara Honigmann** was born in East Berlin in 1949. She established herself as an influential German-Jewish writer thanks to her plays, essays, and novels that explore her relationship with Jewish and German culture and history in the twentieth century. Honigmann's parents left Germany for England during the Second World War and returned to East Berlin at the end of the war. Honigmann studied theater at Humboldt University. After living for many years under a socialist regimen, she immigrated to Strasbourg, France, where she developed her career as a prose writer and established her new residence. Honigmann continued to engage with Jewish-German history and the cultural changes experienced among the new generations. Her work problematizes traditional ideas of identity and resists conventional ideas of national literature and art. Honigmann has received literary prizes for her works, such as the Kleist Prize in 2000 and the Koret Jewish Book Award in 2004. The essays included in this issue are part of her 1998 book, *Am Sonntag spielt der Rabbi Fußball* (On Sunday the rabbi plays soccer). In this collection of "sketches," Honigmann presents us with her experience of meeting a highly diverse Jewish community in Strasbourg. This book explores the beauty and power of everyday life from a writer's perspective that creates her art from her encounter with tradition and change, the transnational and the local, the personal and the communal.

**Elfriede Jelinek** is an Austrian author best known for her novels and plays but whose extensive body of work also includes poetry, essays, and radio drama. Born in Styria, Austria, in 1946, she studied music from an early age and graduated from the Vienna Conservatory before beginning her literary career. She has said that her musical training has had a strong impact on her writing. In 2004, she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, "for her musical flow of voices and counter-voices in novels and plays that with extraordinary linguistic zeal reveal the absurdity of society's clichés and their subjugating power." Befitting the public controversy with which Jelinek is often associated, one member of the Swedish Academy resigned in protest of the decision. Jelinek is known for her radical leftist politi-

cal views regarding the interplay of language, power, gender, capital, sex, and violence in Austria—expressed in her literary work as well as in speeches, interviews, and essays. She is also active as a translator and co-authored the 1981 German translation of Thomas Pynchon’s novel *Gravity’s Rainbow*. Though Jelinek is one of the most famous and highly decorated living authors of German literature, she is less known in the English-speaking world, in part due to the relative scarcity of published English translations of her work to date.

**Özlem Karuç** is a translator, teacher, and PhD candidate in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on literature and film dealing with the German Exile Era (1933–1945) and with questions of migration, exile, race, and ethnicity in postwar Germany. Currently, she is examining the intersectionalities of Black German and Turkish German identities as (self-)represented in literature and film, against the backdrop of how Germanness has been configured from the fall of the Wall to the present. Özlem recently translated over fifty art songs and all related concert programs for Elbphilharmonie Hamburg’s concert series *Song of America: A Celebration of Black Music*. Her translations were used in program printouts and as subtitles for the recordings of the concerts available as online streams.

**Michaela Kotziers** is a PhD student in English and Women’s and Gender Studies at the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on phenomenological experiences of gender and sexuality, women’s life writing, and lesbian feminist politics.

**Ronnith Neumann** is a Jewish-German writer and photographer whose work explores geographical and linguistic displacement, postwar German Jewish identity, and the relationship of tradition and change in late twentieth-century Germany. Neumann was born in Israel in 1948. At the age of ten, she immigrated with her family to Germany. She would train as a photographer, work in the Norddeutscher Rundfunk in Hamburg, and develop her manifold writing career. She explores “the possibilities for renegotiating the parameters of a specifically German-Jewish identity in post-Shoah Germany” and raises questions of home, origins, ruptures, and displacements. Her literary work of more than four decades includes plays, novels, and short stories. She has received numerous awards, including the Hamburg

Literature Prize for Short Prose in 1986, the Gladbecker Satirepreis in 1989, and the Herford Culture Prize in 1995.

**Ronya Othmann** is a poet, novelist, and journalist living in Leipzig, Germany. She grew up in Landkreis Freising with her Yazidi-Kurdish father and German mother. In 2014, she began her studies at the German Literature Institute in Leipzig. Her poetry has appeared in several anthologies and journals, and her debut novel, *Die Sommer* (The summer), was published in 2020 by Hanser Verlag and shortlisted for the Aspekte-Literaturpreis. Othmann won the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize Audience Award in 2019 for her essay “Vierundsiebzig” (Seventy-four) on the 2014 Yazidi genocide by the Islamic State in Sinjar, Iraq. Othmann co-writes an online column titled “Orient Express” with Cemile Sahin in *taz*, and her personal-political investments are reflected in her other journalistic work as well; she frequently writes about German foreign affairs in the Near East, immigration, discrimination, Kurdish politics, and queerness. The series of poems selected for this issue move with animals in flight, dreams of beds like ships, bittersweet departures, and the body in landscape.

**Sharon Dodua Otoo** describes herself as “a Black British mother, activist, author and editor.” Her parents migrated from Accra, Ghana, to London, England, where she was born and raised. In 1991, Otoo spent a year in Hannover, Germany. Her interest in German came much earlier (ca. 1985) when she started to learn it in school as her second foreign language. After studying German and Management Studies at the University of London, she moved back to Germany, where she resides today, together with her four sons. Since then, she has written numerous literary texts as well as articles for newspapers and journals. She also edits the book series Witnessed and is actively involved with the Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (Initiative of Black People in Germany).

**Elizabeth Sokol** is a PhD student in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. Her research interests include early twentieth-century German literature, translation studies, and media studies.

**Zafer Şenocak**, a German writer born in Ankara in 1961, is the author of a broad and deep oeuvre of poetry, prose, essays, and

translations. He writes in German and Turkish. His debut book, the poetry collection *Elektrisches Blau* (*Electrical Blue*, 1983) first established him as a leading contemporary German author and an important voice of bi-culturalism. He has since published numerous novels, essays, translations, and volumes of poetry. His most recent book, *Das Fremde, das in jedem wohnt: Wie Unterschiede unsere Gesellschaft zusammenhalten* (*The foreignness that lives in everyone: How differences unite our society*, 2018), is an autobiographically inflected reflection on the fear and the abiding value of difference and diversity. He was awarded the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize in 1988. He frequently spends time in the United States at various universities as their writer-in-residence.

**Veronica Cook Williamson** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. Her research interests include post-1989 German literature, the coloniality of migration, modes of translation within and across diasporic Arabic-speaking communities in Germany, and museum studies.

**Silke-Maria Weineck** is the Grace Lee Boggs Professor of German and Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan. She has been *Absinthe's* editor-in-chief since the journal moved to the university in 2015.

**Serhiy Zhadan** is a poet, translator, novelist, and essayist born in Starobilsk, Ukraine. He studied German at Kharkiv University and has been working as a poet, translator, novelist, and essayist since the mid-nineties. His collection of poems, *Warum ich nicht im Netz bin: Gedichte und Prosa aus dem Krieg* (*Why I'm not online: Poems and prose from the war*), are written from the perspective of the post-independence generation in Ukraine, set during the ongoing Russian occupation and aggression against Ukrainian territories. The collection was first translated to German by Claudia Dathe. Zhadan's poetry showcases the everyday efforts of resistance and solidarity among Ukrainians living on the front lines in eastern Ukraine who seek to uphold their sovereignty and deepen connections with powerful member nations of the European Union rather than Russia. Zhadan participated in numerous pro-European Union protests in Kyiv and has been banned from Russia since 2015.