

FEBRUARY

New Year by Juli Zeh, translated by Atla L. Price

(German: ***Neujahr***)

189 pages. Published November 2021. World Editions

ISBN 9781642860993

Lanzarote, the Canary Islands on New Year's Day: Henning is cycling up the steep path to Femés. As he struggles against the wind and the gradient he takes stock of his life. He has a job, a wife, two children—yet hardly recognizes himself anymore. Panic attacks have been pouncing on him like demons. When he finally reaches the pass in utter exhaustion, a mysterious coincidence unveils a repressed yet vivid memory, plunging him back into childhood and the traumatic event that almost cost him and his sister their lives. In this compelling and darkly psychological novel, Juli Zeh tells the breathtaking story of two small children who, in the middle of a holiday in paradise, end up in hell and live to tell the tale.

MARCH

High As The Waters Rise by Anja Kampmann, translated by Anne Posten

(German: ***Wie hoch die Wasser steigen***)

320 pages. Published September 2020. Catapult

ISBN 9781948226523

One night aboard an oil drilling platform in the Atlantic, Waclaw returns to his cabin to find that his bunkmate and companion, Mátyás, has gone missing. A search of the rig confirms his fear that Mátyás has fallen into the sea. Grief-stricken, he embarks on an epic emotional and physical journey that takes him to Morocco, to Budapest and Mátyás's hometown in Hungary, to Malta, Italy, and finally to the mining town of his childhood in Germany. Waclaw's encounters along the way with other lost and yearning souls—Mátyás's angry, grieving half-sister; lonely rig workers on shore leave; a truck driver who watches the world change from his driver's seat—bring us closer to his origins while also revealing the problems of a globalized economy dependent on waning natural resources.

High as the Waters Rise is a stirring exploration of male intimacy, the nature of memory and grief, and the cost of freedom—the story of a man who stands at the margins of a society from which he has profited little, though its functioning depends on his labor.

APRIL

The Interim by Wolfgang Hilbig, translated by Isabel Fargo Cole

(German: ***Das Provisorium***)

256 pages. Published November 2021. Two Lines Press

ISBN 9781949641233

C. is a wretched grump, an anguished patron of bars, peep shows, and train stations. He is also an acclaimed East German writer. Dogged by writer's block, remorse, and national guilt in the years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, he leaves the monochromatic existence of the GDR for the neon excess of the West. There at least the novelty of his origins grant him easy money and minor celebrity, if also a deflating sense of complacency. With his visa set to expire and several relationships hanging in the balance, C. travels back and forth, mentally and physically, between two Germanys, contemplating diverging visions of the world and what they mean for people like him: alienated and aimless witnesses to history. This monumental novel from one of the greatest chroniclers of postwar Germany, masterfully translated by Isabel Fargo Cole, interrogates with bitter wit and singular brilliance the detritus of twentieth-century life: addiction, consumerism, God, pay-per-view pornography, selfishness, statelessness, and above all else, the writer's place in a "century of lies."

MAY

An Inventory of Losses by Judith Schalansky, translated by Damion Searls

(German: ***Verzeichnis Einiger Verluste***)

224 pages. Published December 2020. New Directions

ISBN 9780811229630

Named a best book of 2021 by *The Wall Street Journal*: **"Disappearance may be a forlorn theme, but it has rarely been granted such reverent contemplation, or been made to feel so powerfully tangible."**

Each disparate object described in this book—a Caspar David Friedrich painting, a species of tiger, a villa in Rome, a Greek love poem, an island in the Pacific—shares a common fate: it no longer exists, except as the dead end of a paper trail. Recalling the works of W. G. Sebald, Bruce Chatwin, and Rebecca Solnit, *An Inventory of Losses* is a beautiful evocation of twelve specific treasures that have been lost to the world forever, and that, taken as a whole, open mesmerizing new vistas of how to think about extinction and loss. With meticulous research and a vivid awareness of why we should care about these losses, Judith Schalansky, the acclaimed author of *Atlas of Remote Islands*, lets these objects speak for themselves: she ventriloquizes the tone of other sources, burrows into the language of contemporaneous accounts, and deeply interrogates the very notion of memory.

JULY

The Liquid Land by Raphaela Edelbauer, translated by Jen Calleja

(German: ***Das Flüssige Land***)

336 pages. Published August 2021. Scribe UK

ISBN 9781925849967

A town that doesn't want to be found. A countess who rules over the memories of an entire community. A hole in the earth that threatens to drag them all into its depths. When her parents die in a car accident, the highly talented physicist Ruth Schwarz is confronted with an almost intractable problem. Her parents' will calls for them to be buried in their childhood home – but for strangers, Gross-Einland is a village that remains stubbornly hidden from view. When Ruth finally finds her way there, she makes a disturbing discovery: beneath the town lies a vast cavern that seems to exert a strange control over the lives of the villagers. There are hidden clues about the hole everywhere, but nobody wants to talk about it – not even when it becomes clear that the stability of the entire town is in jeopardy. Is this silence controlled by the charming countess who rules the community? The more questions Ruth asks, the more vehement the resistance she encounters from the residents. But as she continues to dig deeper, she comes to realise that the key to deciphering the mysterious codes of the people of Gross-Einland can only lie in the history of the hole.

In the literary tradition of Thomas Bernhard and Elfriede Jelinek, Raphaela Edelbauer weaves the complexities of small-town social structures into an opaque dream fabric that is frighteningly true to life, and in the process she turns us towards the abject horror that lies beneath repressed memory. *The Liquid Land* is a dangerous novel, at once glittering nightmare and dark reality, from an extraordinary new literary voice.

AUGUST

1,000 Coils of Fear by Olivia Wenzel, translated by Priscilla Layne

(German: ***1000 Serpentinaen Angst***)

288 pages. Published August 2021. Catapult

ISBN 9781646220502

A multilayered and rhythmic debut novel about her life as a Black German woman living in Berlin and New York during the chaos of the 2016 U.S. presidential election from playwright Olivia Wenzel. A young woman attends a play about the fall of the Berlin Wall—and realizes she is the only Black person in the audience. She and her boyfriend are hanging out by a lake outside Berlin—and four neo-Nazis show up. In New York, she is having sex with a stranger on the night of the 2016 presidential election—and wakes up to panicked texts from her friends in Germany about Donald Trump's unlikely victory. Engaging in a witty Q&A with herself—or is it her alter ego?—she takes stock of our rapidly changing times, sometimes angry, sometimes amused, sometimes afraid, and always passionate. And she tells the story of her family: Her mother, a punk in former East Germany who never had the freedom she dreamed of. Her Angolan father, who returned to his home country before she was born to

start a second family. Her grandmother, whose life of obedience to party principles brought her prosperity and security but not happiness. And her twin brother, who took his own life at the age of nineteen.

Heart-rending, opinionated, and wry, Olivia Wenzel's remarkable debut novel is a clear-sighted and polyphonic investigation into origins and belonging, the roles society wants to force us into and why we need to resist them, and the freedoms and fears that being the odd one out brings.

SEPTEMBER

Identitti by Mithu Sanyal, translated by Alta L. Price

(German: ***Identitti***)

400 pages. Published July 2022. Astra House

ISBN 9781662601293

The Sellout meets *Interior Chinatown* in this satirical debut about a German-Indian student whose world is upended when she discovers that her beloved professor who passed for Indian is, in fact, white. Nivedita (a.k.a. Identitti), a well-known blogger and doctoral student is, in awe of her supervisor—superstar postcolonial and race studies professor Saraswati. But her life and sense of self are turned upside down when it emerges that Saraswati is actually white. Nivedita's praise of Saraswati during a radio interview just hours before the news breaks—and before she learns the truth—calls into question her own reputation as a young activist. Following the uproar, Nivedita is forced to reflect on the key moments in her life, when she doubted her identity and her place in the world. As debates on the scandal rage on social media, blogs, and among her closest friends, Nivedita's assumptions are called into question as she reconsiders the lessons she learned from her adored professor. In her thought-provoking, genre-bending debut, Mithu Sanyal enlisted the contributions and commentary of real-life public intellectuals as if Saraswati were a real person. A darkly comedic tour de force, *Identitti* showcases the outsized power of social media in the current debates about identity politics and the power of claiming your own voice.

OCTOBER

Where You Come From by Saša Stanišić, translated by Damion Searls

(German: ***Herkunft***)

364 pages. Published December 2021. Tin House

ISBN 9781951142759

Winner of the German Book Prize, Saša Stanišić's inventive and surprising novel asks: what makes us who we are?

In August, 1992, a boy and his mother flee the war in Yugoslavia and arrive in Germany. Six months later, the boy's father joins them, bringing a brown suitcase, insomnia, and a scar on

his thigh. Saša Stanišić's *Where You Come From* is a novel about this family, whose world is uprooted and remade by war: their history, their life before the conflict, and the years that followed their escape as they created a new life in a new country. Blending autofiction, fable, and choose-your-own-adventure, *Where You Come From* is set in a village where only thirteen people remain, in lost and made-up memories, in coincidences, in choices, and in a dragons' den. Translated by Damion Searls, it's a novel about homelands, both remembered and imagined, lost and found. A book that playfully twists form and genre with wit and heart to explore questions that lie inside all of us: about language and shame, about arrival and making it just in time, about luck and death, about what role our origins and memories play in our lives.

NOVEMBER

The Naked Eye by Yoko Tawada, translated by Susan Bernofsky

(German: ***Das Nackte Auge***)

256 pages. Published May 2009. New Directions

ISBN 9780811217392

A precocious Vietnamese high school student – known as the pupil with “the iron blouse” – in Ho Chi Minh City is invited to an International Youth Conference in East Berlin. But, in East Berlin, as she is preparing to present her paper in Russian on “Vietnam as a Victim of American Imperialism,” she is abruptly kidnapped and taken to a small town in West Germany. After a strange spell of domestic-sexual boredom with her lover-abductor – and though “the Berlin Wall was said to be more difficult to break through than the Great Wall of China” – she escapes on a train to Moscow ... but mistakenly arrives in Paris. Alone, broke, and in a completely foreign land, Anh (her false name) loses herself in the films of Catherine Deneuve as her real adventures begin. Dreamy, meditative, and filled with the gritty everyday perils of a person living somewhere without papers (at one point Anh is subjected to some vampire-like skin experiments), *The Naked Eye* is a novel that is as surprising as it is delightful.

DECEMBER

Measuring the World by Daniel Kehlmann, translated by Carol Brown Janeway

(German: ***Die Vermessung der Welt***)

272 pages. Published October 2007. Vintage

ISBN 9780307277398

Measuring the World marks the debut of a glorious new talent on the international scene. Young Austrian writer Daniel Kehlmann's brilliant comic novel revolves around the meeting of two colossal geniuses of the Enlightenment. Late in the eighteenth century, two young Germans set out to measure the world. One of them, the aristocratic naturalist Alexander von

Humboldt, negotiates jungles, voyages down the Orinoco River, tastes poisons, climbs the highest mountain known to man, counts head lice, and explores and measures every cave and hill he comes across. The other, the reclusive and barely socialized mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss, can prove that space is curved without leaving his home. Terrifyingly famous and wildly eccentric, these two polar opposites finally meet in Berlin in 1828, and are immediately embroiled in the turmoil of the post-Napoleonic world.