

Wallstein Verlag

Foreign Rights Catalogue | Autumn 2019



Fiction
Editions
History
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Backlist Highlights



Wallstein Verlag

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About Wallstein

Wallstein Publishing was founded in 1986. A major event in the development of the publishing house was the huge success of Ruth Klüger's biography »weiter leben – Eine Jugend« (Still alive) in 1992. Partly due to its high literary quality, this book is one of the most-read literary works written in German on the subject of the holocaust, and has become a »classic of holocaust literature«.

Wallstein continues to add approximately 180 books per year to its list, with an annual turnover of approximately two million euros.

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Explores the themes of guilt, responsibility, love and the desire to escape from everyday life.

Kai Weyand

The Power of Escape

Novel



Kai Weyand
The Power of Escape
Novel

ca. 170 pages

From the outside, Karl's life seems to be perfectly in order, yet somehow he feels that everything is beginning to slip away from him. His close connection with his wife and son is gradually deteriorating – their conversations seem to be leading nowhere – and even his relationship with his father, who is in need of care, is becoming complicated. Inspired not only by the students at the prison where he teaches, but also by Homer, a very special boy he meets every day on his way to work, he begins to think about his life. And then there is Karoline – although he does not really know her, he thinks about her rather a lot. On a spontaneous whim he writes to her, and is surprised by the in-depth exchange on guilt, responsibility, love and life itself that ensues.

In his new novel, Kai Weyand creates idiosyncratic figures with a sparing use of words and a keen sense for comical and bizarre situations. He tells of friendship, relationships and the power that thoughts and decisions can have on our lives.

Kai Weyand, born in 1968, studied at the Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg. Having formerly worked as a teacher in the penitentiary system, he is now employed by a law firm and lives near Freiburg. His novel »Applause for Bronikowski«, published in 2015, was included in the longlist for the German Book Prize in 2015.

Steven Bloom

Mendel Kabakov and the Year of the Monkey

Novel

It is 1968, the Year of the Monkey according to the Chinese calendar. Mendel Kabakov, a Jewish professor of American history living in New York, mourns the loss of his recently deceased wife Sonia, with whom he lived for almost 50 years. In his memory, he retraces his love for Sonia, and looks back on his own life. The novel not only recounts the story of this love, but also of the personal and family crises experienced by Mendel Kabakov's children and grandchildren. For the younger generation in particular, 1968 is a time of upheaval, a time when rebellion against the Vietnam War and general social conditions reaches its peak. Discrimination – whether it is against blacks, Jews or homosexuals – is the order of the day. Mendel masters the difficulties and challenges of this era with wit and irony.

In a light-footed and tender tone, Steven Bloom speaks of the great themes of love and family, set against the revolutionary political and social events of the last century.

Steven Bloom, born in 1942 in Brooklyn, New York as the son of a Polish Jew, lives in Heidelberg. He was a radio journalist in the USA and worked at the University of Heidelberg for many years.

»Mendel Kabakov and the Year of the Monkey« is available in the form of an unedited original manuscript in English.

The story of a Jewish family in New York, touching on the great themes of love, death and rebellion.



Steven Bloom
Mendel Kabakov and the Year of the Monkey
Novel

208 pages

Glasses as a cultural and
stylistic object.

Stefana Sabin

The Blink of an Eye

A Cultural History of Spectacles



Stefana Sabin
The Blink of an Eye
A Cultural History of Spectacles

ca. 96 pages, ca. 30 illustrations

From the green emerald through which Emperor Nero watched gladiator fights, to Benjamin Franklin's homemade glasses for reading as well as distance vision, or Marilyn Monroe's cat glasses, which heralded a fashionable change. From the nobleman Titirel in the story of the Holy Grail to Emma Bovary and Harry Potter – this book tells of historical figures and figures from painting and literature, all of whom wore glasses.

The printing press, mechanisation, automation and digitisation were harbingers of profound and lasting changes that have transformed social, cultural and economic conditions in such a way that we commonly refer to them as revolutions. But there are also quieter revolutions: for example, when an apparently banal object fundamentally changes people's living and working conditions. One such object is a pair of spectacles. It could be said that modernity begins with a paradigm shift in medical philosophy, transforming visual impairment from a disease treated with pomades and tinctures into an impairment that can be corrected by means of technical instruments.

Stefana Sabin studied in Frankfurt, Haifa and Los Angeles, gaining her doctorate with a literary study in 1982. Since then, she has worked for the feuilleton of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. She has been the editor of the online magazine *FAUST-Kultur* since 2010.

Backlist Highlights

Rights available

Günter Kunert

The Second Woman

Novel | 204 pages

Whilst looking through an old trunk, Günter Kunert recently found a manuscript that he wrote almost forty-five years ago – a novel so bold, explosive and »politically impossible« that Kunert, who was still living in the GDR at the time, did not even show it to a publisher. Knowing that it was »absolutely unprintable«, he buried the manuscript so deep in his archives that he forgot all about it himself, only rediscovering it by chance.

Kunert is famous for his sceptical poems, which warn us of ecological catastrophes and undesirable developments, for his miniatures and short prose texts, notations, radio plays, films; he is little known as a novelist. Yet here is a novel, sparkling and fresh, written halfway through his life. The male protagonist is looking for a gift for his wife's fortieth birthday; the choice in the shops is every bit as discouraging as his own lack of imagination. In the end, he exchanges East German Marks for West German currency so that he can go and buy something at the Intershop, where he makes some thoughtless remarks. A tragicomedy unfolds about Montaigne, misunderstandings and the absurdity of the Stasi.

Emanuel Maeß

Rights available

Junctures of Light

Novel | 254 pages

Ever since he saw her dancing on the beach at a Dionysian Neptune Festival, Angelika's admirer has been in a state of turmoil. Not only does the encounter have a consciousness-expanding effect on his perception, he is also seized by a grave and all-embracing desire for truth, beauty and self-knowledge. His search leads him from Urspring on the river Werra, a provincial idyll deeply rooted in the past under the shadow of the Iron Curtain, to seats of knowledge and world cities of wisdom. Gods, spirits and demons speak out when the postmodern world of study leaves crucial questions unanswered. Are they too late? All that remains in the end is love, the leap and the junctures of light.

Emanuel Maeß has written an eloquent novel, the playful lightness and depth of which is unparalleled in recent literature.

Steffen Mensching

Rights available

Schermann's Eyes

Novel | 820 pages

A novel set in the Gulag, with German and Austrian protagonists as well as a retrospective view of Vienna in the 1920s. A novel that leads us to the heart of the 20th century.

Just a short while previously, Rafael Schermann had been a colourful figure in the Viennese coffeehouse scene and now this dazzling figure finds himself desolate and fatally ill, imprisoned in the Artek camp at the end of the world. This person who can predict the future on the basis of handwriting immediately attracts a great deal of interest – whether it be from the camp commander or from his fellow prisoners. And then Schermann claims he cannot speak Russian, and demands a translator. Steffen Mensching places the young German communist Otto Haferkorn at his side. The mismatched pair fights for survival under brutal, absurd conditions in the murderous cogwheel of the twentieth century.

Rights sold:

- Arabic: Atlas Publishing House
- Bulgarian: Black Flamingo Publishing Ltd.
- Croatian: Edicije Božičević
- French: Editions Zoé
- Persian: Nimaj Publisher
- Russian: Aletheia Publishers
- Slovenian: KUD Sodobnost International
- Spanish: Adriana Hidalgo Editora S.A.

Lukas Bärfuss

Hagard

Novel | 190 pages

A man has been standing at the entrance of a department store in the closing-time rush when suddenly, on a whim, he begins following a woman. He does not know her, and only sees her from behind. But as though he were looking into a mirror, he says to himself: if she goes that way I will stop following her, but if she goes in the other direction I will continue to play the game for a little longer. It means nothing, noone is going to come to any harm, and the distance between us in the crowd is so large that the woman will not even notice. It is more of a sporting challenge not to get lost in the crowd.

Rights available

War and Love

Essays | 294 pages

The Essays of Lukas Bärfuss are an event. Sharply observed, sharply thought out, sharply formulated. Whether he addresses broad historical and political topics or specific questions relating to the lives of ordinary people, Lukas Bärfuss is an author and thinker of European format. He communicates complex facts in a way that enables the reader to follow his sharp-witted arguments. Whether he writes about Switzerland or his experiences in Africa and South America, whether he muses on the work of authors from Goethe, Nietzsche and Tolstoy to Nicolas Born or Ovid, Stendhal and Sakurai, there is always an element of enlightenment. Bärfuss writes about religion and belief, morality in journalism and the life of a sales representative for decalcifying equipment. It turns out that it is not about the importance of the individual question – the author continually draws our attention to the bigger picture, ethical dimensions.

Susanne Fritz

Rights available

They left us War and Silence

268 pages

A highly personal book about the fate of the author's mother and her own family. A search for traces of the past, a German-Polish historiography and a narrative, all at the same time.

Her mother was fourteen years old when she was arrested and taken to the Polish labour camp Potulice in 1945. The reason: at the age of 9, in a region that had been invaded by Hitler, she had signed a form to say that she identified herself as a German citizen. Without making premature judgement, Susanne Fritz tells a moving story of the fate of her mother and the entire family over several generations. She asks questions concerning humanity and betrayal, identity and language, always making reference to historical documents. In this way, she throws light not only on her own family history, but on the relationship between Germany and Poland during the course of two World Wars, describing all the historical upheavals involved and their effect on each individual. Susanne Fritz opens up a profound dialogue with the past – she does so because she wishes to understand how it secretly influences her own existence.

Maja Haderlap

Rights sold:

Angel of Oblivion

Novel | 288 pages

The story of a young girl and a family, that at the same time relates to the story of a nation. It goes back to the memories of a childhood in the mountains at Kärnten. In a highly sensuous way, the author recalls the scents of summer, her grandmother's cooking, her parents' fights and the idiosyncrasies of the neighbours. It tells of a girl growing up and her attempts to understand her family and the people around her.

Although the war is over, it is still omnipresent in the minds of the Slovenian minority to which the family belongs and has more influence on people's behavior than she would have ever guessed.

- Arabic: Dar Al-Muna
- Croatian: Disput d.o.o.
- Czech: HAVRAN s.r.o.
Publishing House
- Dutch: Uitgeverij Cossee
- English: Archipelago Books
- French: Éditions Métailié
- Italian: Keller Editore
- Slovenian: Litera Verlag

Rights available

Teresa Präauer

Becoming an Animal

100 pages

In »Becoming an Animal«, Teresa Präauer observes stages of transition, transformation, metamorphosis. Her text allows anyone or anything that has hair to make an appearance: in places that are overgrown with textured surfaces, fur, fake fur or grass. She has assembled a collection of shaggy figures for this purpose, from medieval drawings of mythical creatures – half real, half fantasy – to hairpieces from the Alps, Toni Erdmann wearing wigs and costumed furies from subculture. The author explores all these artificial and artistic phenomena in concrete pictorial observations and philosophical considerations.

In Teresa Präauer's work, animalisation is a procedure described in terms of art, culture, film and fashion, but she also applies it to the writing and reading of literature itself. As we write, we exhaust the possibilities of speech, reaching its human limits. As we read, we are transformed, according to the warning and the promise this narrative-essayistic text holds.

Rights available

Johnny and Jean

Novel | 208 pages

Create good art! Johnny and Jean have no less goal in mind when they meet up again at the art academy after the summer holidays. The story begins with a jump in at the deep end, and there is still quite a way to go before embarking on an international career in New York and Paris. Some things that seem to be of help are the murmurings of the old masters, well-sharpened pencils and a bottle of Pastic.

In a series of adventurous episodes, Teresa Präauer fabricates the life of two young men who are out to discover everything about art and life. Sensuous and quick-witted!

For the Ruler from Overseas

Novel | 138 pages

A novel about flying, love, and the pure beauty of language.

The grandfather tells a story to his grandchildren that is so playful and fantastic, it is hard to believe – but even harder to turn away from. It brings up sheer fireworks of imagination in the minds of the children. And there is this spark in his eyes every time he speaks of this mysterious Japanese woman, it just cannot be all made up ...

Rights sold:

- Arabic: Kalima Foundation
- Turkish: Kalem Agency

Kai Weyand

Applause for Bronikowski

Novel | 188 pages

For Kai Weyand it's a matter of life and death. Very funny.

Nies is over thirty now, but sometimes he still seems far away from becoming an adult. He prefers spending his time throwing eggs and tomatoes against buildings to working in a bank like his brothers. He is an observer, a player who makes up his own mind about everything. It is more by luck than judgement that he suddenly finds himself with a job: at a funeral parlour. The confrontation with death proves demanding, especially as a sense of responsibility has not been one of his outstanding characteristics up until now.

Rights available

Rights sold:

- Arabic: Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority
- Belarusian: Lohvinau House of Literature
- Czech: Větrné mlýny
- French: Quidam éditeur

Gregor Sander

What Would Have Been

Novel | 236 pages

Gregor Sander interweaves past and present, telling tales of German life histories that almost make your head spin. He succeeds in creating delicate images that are full of surprises: Love, friendship, escape, betrayal. Nothing is how it seems at first glance. Or at second, or even third.

Rights sold:

- French: Editions Zoé

Matthias Zschokke

The Strict Ladies of the Rosa Salva

414 pages

There are a considerable number of books about Venice. But no one has ever written one like this before! It brings the magnetism of the town to life in such a passionate, observant and laconic way that it overwhelms you.

Zschokke's infectious curiosity protects him from idealisation – it is directed towards the whole world, wishing to fully grasp everything it is possible to know. In this way a shimmering kaleidoscope emerges, a study of the big picture and the smallest of quirks, from theatrical rumblings and the literary scene to the real things of everyday existence. A marvellous thing, this book.

Florian Schubert

Rights available

Anti-Semitism in Football

Tradition and Taboo Breaking | 488 pages

Football is played by millions of people in Germany, and watched by even more fans in the stadium or on screen. It is a cultural event – but according to the author Florian Schubert, it is at the same time an area where discrimination, especially anti-Semitism, still exists.

Florian Schubert investigates the form and contexts in which anti-Semitism has appeared in football since the 1980s in West and East Germany, and how it is evaluated within the area of football. He analyses the function of anti-Semitic behaviour among fans, players and club officials – from the national team and the German Football Association to regional clubs. The final question is whether the stadium occupies a special position with regard to discriminatory behaviour, or whether it can be seen as fuel for social phenomena.

Mareike Vennen

Awarded the »Opus Primum« 2018, the Volkswagen Foundation's sponsorship prize for the best newcomer publication of the year.

The Aquarium

Practices, techniques and media in the production of knowledge (1840-1910) | 423 pages

Rights available

The invention of the aquarium around 1850 made it possible to observe, explore and experience the underwater world in a completely new way. Mareike Vennen traces the early history of the aquarium as a medium.

She follows human and non-human actors: hobbyists, scientists, glass plates, pumps, dripping missives, water snails and mud all make an appearance as protagonists. A series of micro-historic case histories shows which media were used to capture and pass on knowledge and ideas about life under water. The aquarium thus emerges as part of a history of ecological knowledge; its reconstruction shows how knowledge systems became dynamic in the 19th century, and how the boundaries between fields of knowledge and disciplines shifted.

Rights available

Habbo Knoch

Grand Hotels

Luxurious Locations and the Changes in Society in New York, London and Berlin around 1900 | 495 pages

Whether it is seen as a »marvellous thing« or a »form of homeless existence«: from the beginning of ultra-modernity around 1880 to after the First World War, the grand hotel had a central significance for the social life of the European and American elite. It was a meeting place for men of power and social climbers, business people and travellers, literary figures and posers.

Associated with the luxurious life of the grand hotels, Habbo Knoch describes a wide panorama of metropolitan sociability around 1900, between belief in progress and cultural criticism. The author clearly shows how, in the grand hotel as a symbol of modernity, traditional social order was dismissed in favour of temporary societies.

Rights available

Hannah Ahlheim

The Dream of Sleep in the 20th Century

Knowledge, optimisation fantasies and resistance | 695 pages, 21 illustrations

Sleep – the subject of myths, stories and images for thousands of years.

The human being spends a good third of his life sleeping. The time we spend asleep may be unconscious, unproductive and inactive, but it is also indispensable, and we often long for it. How does a society in which scientific understanding, rationality and efficiency play a central role approach an uncontrollable phenomenon such as sleep? Hannah Ahlheim's study of the development of »sleep knowledge« in Germany and the USA since the late 19th century combines the history of a science with the history of modern society in a consistent way. Advances in science, the development of synthetic sleeping pills and the experience of war have made continually new demands on the daily organisation of sleep.

Kim Ritter | Heinz-Jürgen Voß

Rights available

Being Bi

Bisexuality, between Invisibility and Chic | 63 pages

At the beginning of the 20th century, Magnus Hirschfeld developed his central idea of sexual intermediaries, the fundamental insight that all human beings are intersexual variants.

So if humans are fundamentally bisexual beings, why do we so rarely encounter the subject? On the one hand, bisexual people are hardly visible as such in everyday life and community debates; on the other, celebrities seem quite willing to acknowledge their bisexuality. Where does this strange contradiction between invisibility and chic originate?

Heinz-Jürgen Voß presents theoretical approaches to questions of gender and sexual development and deals with human sexuality from the perspective of cultural and sexual science. From a sociological perspective, on the basis of biographical interviews, Kim Ritter talks about the experiences of bisexual people, which vary between recognition and contempt.

Aleida Assmann

Forms of Forgetting

224 pages

Amidst our prevailing concern with the topic of remembrance today, we appear to have forgotten how to forget. Although in fact it is forgetting, not remembering, that is the fundamental mode of human and social life. Generally, remembering implies an exception, making an effort, rebelling against time and the normal course of events. Remembering, on the other hand, is the unlikely exception, subject to certain conditions. However, remembering and forgetting are not mutually exclusive concepts: in order to remember something, many other things must be forgotten, both on an individual and on a collective level.

Aleida Assmann examines collective forms of forgetting in social, political and cultural contexts – culminating in the question of the impossibility of forgetting on the internet.

Rights sold:

- Italian: Società editrice il Mulino
- Serbian: Biblioteka XX Vek
- Russian: Redakciya zhurnala Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie/ New literary Observer

Rights available

Verena Dohrn

The Kahans from Baku

A family biography | 519 pages, 57 illustrations

The story of a Jewish business family in turbulent times – between forced migration and entrepreneurial spirit.

The destiny of the Kahans mirrors a dramatic century of European history from the perspective of a Jewish entrepreneurial family. In competition with Nobel and in cooperation with Rothschild, Chaim Kahan (1850–1916), who came from a Stetl in Poland/Lithuania, made his fortune in the oilfields of Baku. However, the First World War tore the family apart, and Bolshevik rule destroyed the milieu that had brought him prosperity. In these unstable times, his seven children inherited his companies. They fled to Berlin, founded new companies, became global players in the oil business and thus thwarted the stereotype of the poor Eastern Jew. When the Nazis came to power, the family, which had a good transnational network, fled again – from Berlin to Paris, and from there to Tel Aviv and New York. Once again, a sense of tradition and a sense of family proved their worth in times of need.

Rights sold:

· Polish: Fundacja Ośrodku Karta

Friedrich Kellner

»Clouded, Darkened are all Minds«

Diaries 1939–1945 | 2 vols, together 1134 pages

Edited by Sascha Feuchert, Robert Kellner, Erwin Leibfried, Jörg Riecke and Markus Roth

The diaries of the judicial inspector Friedrich Kellner show that everyone was in a position to unmask National Socialist rhetoric and be aware of the atrocities of the Third Reich. By placing newspaper articles next to his comments, Friedrich Kellner finds a highly effective method which places the importance of his diaries alongside that of the reports of Victor Klemperer.

Walther von Seydlitz

Rights available

To Stalingrad

Letters from the front and from captivity 1939 –1955 |
428 pages, 20 illustrations

Edited by Torsten Diedrich and Jens Ebert on behalf of the Centre for Military History and Social Sciences of the Bundeswehr

Published here for the first time: the private documents of one of the most prominent generals.

Walther von Seydlitz was plagued by doubts concerning offensive Nazi military policies even before the encirclement of the German forces. He turned vehemently against Hitler's command to stand and fight. As a prisoner of war, he cooperated with the Red Army with the aim of eliminating Hitler's regime of terror. For this, he was sentenced to death in absentia by the Reichsgericht. After 1945, Seydlitz ended his cooperation with the Red Army, upon which the Soviet Union also sentenced him to death as a war criminal; he was subsequently pardoned and given a 25-year prison sentence. In 1955 he finally returned to the Federal Republic of Germany, where he was socially ostracised due to his »betrayal«.

His letters from the front and captivity between 1939 and 1955 give a unique insight into the course of the Second World War, described with a mixture of private conviction, independent analysis and military insight.

Hans Mommsen

Rights sold:

- Hungarian: Corvina Kiadó
- Russian: AIRO

The Nazi Regime and the Extermination of Judaism in Europe

235 pages

Hans Mommsen, one of the leading contemporary German historians, gives a compact overall interpretation of the complex events leading up to the unleashing of the holocaust. He begins by sketching the hostility against Jews in the Weimar Republic and the role of anti-Semitism during the rise of the Nazi party. He describes how the Nazi regime radicalized the persecution of the Jews, resulting in their complete disenfranchisement.

Rights available

Michael Hagner

The Matter of the Book

280 pages

Michael Hagner combines his analysis of the digital cultural critique of the printed book with a thorough examination of Open Access. In this way, he investigates the very phenomenon that bears some of the responsibility for the contemporary crisis of the book: the excessive supply of scientific literature.

An intelligent analysis of contemporary forms of book publication.

Rights sold:

- Polish: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich
- Spanish: Errata Naturae

Christine Lavant

Notes from the Asylum

140 pages

Edited and with an epilogue by Klaus Amann

Christine Lavant attempts to process her stay on a psychiatric ward in writing: a literary report that gets right under the reader's skin.

At the beginning of the 1950s, Christine Lavant planned to publish the text with her then publisher. However, the authoress was finally unable to make up her mind to go ahead with the undertaking: the publisher was evidently full of enthusiasm, but he demanded a »devout ending«. During her lifetime, the text was never published in German. Only an English translation was broadcast as a radio story by the BBC in 1959. The fact that the German text still exists is owed to the translator Nora Wydenbruck, in whose estate it was found in the mid-1990s. It was published for the first time in 2001, and is now available in a newly edited version.

Joseph Roth and Stefan Zweig

»A Friendship with me is a Perishable Thing«

Correspondence 1927 – 1938 | 624 pages

Edited by Madeleine Rietra and Rainer Joachim Siegel. With an epilogue by Heinz Lunzer

Joseph Roth (1894–1939) and Stefan Zweig (1881–1942) are still two of the most widely read narrators in German literature. The correspondence tells the story of a friendship that is broken apart by the political circumstances – and the story of two lives destroyed by exile. »We exiles don't live long« Zweig comments when Roth dies in Paris in 1939. In 1942, Zweig commits suicide in Petropolis, Brazil.

Rights sold:

- French: SAS Editions Payot et Rivages
- Italian: Adelphi Edizioni S. p.A.
- Spanish: Quaderns Crema, S. A.
- Dutch: Singel Uitgeverijen / De Arbeiderspers

Armin T. Wegner

The Expulsion of the Armenian People into the Desert

215 pages, 103 illustrations

Edited by Andreas Meier. With an essay by Wolfgang Gust

As a first-aid attendant in the First World War, Armin T. Wegner witnessed the stream of Armenian refugees driven into the Syrian Desert by the Turks. Between the years of 1915 and 1917, up to 1.5 million Armenians died there.

Immediately after the war ended, Wegner recapitulated his experiences as an eye witness in a presentation, which he held several times from October 1919 onwards. Here he showed 100 slides he had made in spite of the Turkish ban and – as he said in his lecture – »hid under his truss and smuggled across the border«

Although many of these photographs have greatly influenced the iconography of the genocide, up until now Wegner's eye witness report has remained unpublished.

Rights sold:

- Swedish: Union of Armenian Associations in Sweden
- Ukrainian: Teza Publishers