



B A C K G R O U N D

Background information about speakers, guests and moderators of the public program during the P.E.N. World Congress 2006 in Berlin.

URI AVNERY, born 1923 in Beckum, Germany; emigrated to Palestine in 1933. His memoirs of the war of independence of 1948 made him a public enemy in Israel. 1950-1990 owner and editor of the weekly Haolam Hazeh (This World / Diese Welt), that supported the idea of a Palestine state neighbouring Israel. Co-founder of the peace organisation Gush Shalom (Peace bloc / Friedensblock) that was formed in 1993; For ten years he was a member of the Israeli parliament. Numerous honourings and decorations for his work as political essayist and journalist (e.g. Alternative Nobel Peace Prize). Uri Avnery lives in Tel Aviv. Most recently published: Ein Leben für the Frieden (A Live for Peace - 2003); In the Feldern the Philister (Bi-Sdot Plesht / In the Fields of the Philistines, combat diary, twelve editions, most recent edition in 2005); publications in English: Israel Without Zionism: A Plan for Peace in the Middle East (undated); My Friend, the Enemy (1986).

ZSUZSA BÁNK, born 1965 in Frankfurt/Main to a family of Hungarian refugees, she grew up bilingually. Apprenticeship as a bookseller, publicist, political and literary studies in Mainz and Washington, D.C. After a few years as a business journalist, she has been a freelance writer since 2000; several prizes and awards, among others Literary award Aspekte (2002), 2003 Deutscher Bücherpreis (German Books Award) and Bettina von Arnim-Prize (2003), Adalbert von Chamisso Prize (2004). Most recently published: Der Schwimmer (2002 - Engl.: The Swimmer, transl. by Margot Bettauer Dembo; French: Le nageur, transl. by Olivier Mannoni), Heißester Sommer (2005 - Hottest

Summer).

PATRICK BEBEY, born 1964 in Cameroon. Pianist, singer, flutist, composer. With his trio he plays African rooted music. Studied classical music at the Paris Conservatoire as well as jazz, Brazilian and African music. Today, he is one of the most sought-after musicians in Paris and performs not only Miriam Makeba or Jean-Michel Jarre but also with classical orchestras such as the Stuttgart Philharmonic.

FERNANDO BONASSI, born 1962 in Moóca, a working class neighbourhood of São Paulo, is considered one of the most important Brazilian writers, journalists, theatre dramaturges and film makers of his generation. He does not write in order to entertain, but in order to appeal, Bonassi declares. Consequently, it is the aged, the poor, those who are on the fringes of society, the children and the youth. Following the tradition of Ruben Fonseca, he uses a very colloquial style and language. Bonassi wrote a great number of novels, some of his works were adapted for cinema. At the same time he was co-writer of numerous screenplays and director of several short films. In Germany he became well-known for his play *Apocalypse 1,11*, the production of this by the São Paulo Teatro da Vertigem was the opening performance and a highlight of the Berlin Festival Theater der Welt (Theatre of the World - 2002).

CARMEN BOULLOSA, born 1954 in México City, poet, playwright and narrative writer. She graduated in literary studies at Universidad Iberoamericana and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and was the editor of the "Diccionario del Español en México". Presently, Carmen Boullosa lives in New York. For her stories, novels and plays she won several prizes and honourings. In 1995/96 she was guest of the Berliner Künstlerprogramm (Berlin programme for artists) of the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service). Recently published: *La otra mano de Lepanto*

(2005), *Treinta años*, Alfaguara (1999 - Engl.: *Leaving Tabasco*, transl. by Samantha Schnee), *De un salto descabalga la reina* (2002 - Engl.: *Cleopatra Dismounts*, transl. by Geoff Hargreaves), *La novela perfecta* (*The Perfect Novel* - 2006).

BEI DAO, born 1949 in Beijing. Got involved in the literary scene and the political underground at an early stage; co-founder of the magazine *Jintian* (*Today*). In 1989, when the demonstrations on Tiananmen Square were quelled in violence, Bei Dao was visiting Germany on a scholarship, and he decided for permanent exile. Presently, he lives in California, USA. He is considered one of the most important representatives of Chinese contemporary literature. Most recently published: *Landscape over Zero* (1996 - transl. by David Hinton), *Wu ye zhi men* (2002), *Midnight's Gate: Essays* (2005 - ed. by Christopher Mattison).

BORA ÓOSIĆ, born 1932 in Zagreb, grew up in Belgrade, studied philosophy. In the 1950ies he worked as an editor for various magazines and translator from Russian (Mayakovski, Khlebnikov). In 1956 his first novel *Kuca lopova* (*House of Thieves*) was published. His surrealist outlook upon the world soon enough gained him a place on the black list of writers not recommended for publishing by the Yugoslavian culture bureaucracy. After the theatre version of his satirical novel *My Family's Role in the World Revolution* (1969, Enl. 1997, transl. by Ann Clymer Bigelow), the publication of his works was banned for several years. As a Protest against the course of the Serbian regime, he moved to Rovinj, Istria, in 1992. Since 1995 he lives in Berlin for the most part. Most recent publications: *Nulta Zemlja* (2004 - *The Country Zero*, German: *Das Land Zero*, transl. by Katharina Wolf-Grießhaber), *Dnevnik o Ireni* (2005 - German: *Irenas Zimmer* transl. by Milo Dor).

MAHMOUD DARWISH, born 1941 in the hamlet al-Birwe near Acron, Palestin to a family of small peasants, that was driven out

of their home village in 1948 by Israeli guerillas. His first literary merits got Mahmoud Darwish, who is now considered one of the most important poets of the Arab culture, at the age of 19; since then he has published about 50 books in 30 languages, after another imprisonment, he went to Moscow in 1970 and later to Cairo, Beirut, Tunis, Paris and Amman. In 1988, after his return to Palestine, he became a co-author of the proclamation of the Palestine State and was a member of the Palestine National Council from 1987-93. Numerous Honourings and Prizes. Editor of Al Karmel, the most important literary magazine of the Arab world. Today, Mahmoud Darwish lives in Ramallah. Most recently published volumes of poetry: Grand Street 48: Oblivion (1994), The Adam of Two Edens (2001), Unfortunately, It Was Paradise (2002).

RÓŽA DOMAŠCYNÁ, born 1951 in Zerna/Oberlausitz, Germany. She finished business training and worked as a engineering economist for mining in a brown coalmine for eleven years. From 1985 until 1989, she studied at the Leipzig Literaturinstitut. Domašcyna writes poetry, plays, essays, radio plays and features in German as well as Sorbian-Wendish. She is editor of the literary almanac Wuhladko, a magazine with Sorbian and Wendish translations of contemporary foreign poetry. 1994 - Award of Sponsorship to the Mörike Prize of the City of Fellbach, 1995 - Award of Sponsorship to the Cisinski Prize of the Foundation for the Sorb people, 1998 - Anna Seghers Prize of the Anna Seghers Foundation, Berlin and Mainz, 2001 - Literary prize of the Exile PEN-Club. Róža Domašcyna lives in Bautzen. Most recent publications: in: „Das Meer, Die Insel, Das Schiff. Sorbische Dichtung, anthology (2004 - The Sea, The Isle, The Ship. Sorb Poetry); Poe&Sie. Rabenverse and Wi(e)derlieder, Audiobook CD (2005 - Poe&Sie. Raven Verses and Back(again)chat).

GYÖRGY DRAGOMÁN, born 1973 in Tirgu Mures, Roumania, has been living in Hungary together with his family since 1988. 1992-1998 Studies of Philosophy and English Literature in Budapest, 2003 Bródy Prize for the best first novel. Most recently published in Hungarian: the novel A pusztítás könyve (The Book of Destruction - 2002), the play Nihil (Nowhere - 2003, and the novel A fehér király (The White King - 2005).

DUO DUO (Li Shizheng), born 1951 in Peking, worked as a journalist and has been writing fiction since the early 1970ies; due to the turmoil of the Culture Revolution his works were published in samizdat organs. on the 4th of June, 1989, the morning after the Tiananmen massacre, which he had witnessed, Duo Duo left China for a lecture tour to England. Since that time he lives in exile; he is citizen of the Netherlands, but lives in Haikou, China. Since 2004 Duo Duo teaches at the HaiNan University in Haikou. His works are translated into many languages.

ANNA ENQUIST, born 1945, studied clinical psychology from 1963-1969 in Leiden, graduated the Den Haag Conservatoire as a pianist afterwards and made her first public appearance as a poet in 1991. Anna Enquist works as a psychoanalyst in Amsterdam and has so far published four volumes of poetry, two novels and a volume of short stories. Some of her works were translated into German. Most recently published in English: The Fire Was Here: Poems About Mothers and Children (2003 - transl. by David Colmer); The Ice Carriers (2003 - transl, by Jeannette K. Ringold).

PER OLOV ENQUIST, born 1934 in the north of Sweden, studied literature studies in Uppsala. 1965-76 features columnist and TV moderator. Since 1977 free-lance writer of short stories, novels, youth books, theatre reviews, plays and essays. Lives in Stockholm. Numerous honourings and prizes, e.g. German Books

Award for International Fiction, 2002; Nelly Sachs Prize of the City of Dortmund, 2003; Corine Book Award for fiction 2005. Boken om Blanche och Marie (2004 – Engl. The Book about Blanche and Marie), Lewy's Journey (2005 – both transl. by Tiina Nunnally).

SHERKO FATAH, born 1964 in Berlin East, his father is an Iraqi Kurd, his mother is German. 1975 the parents moved to Berlin West, where Fatah studied philosophy and arts history. 2001 his first novel *Im Grenzland*, which is set in the triangle of Iraq, Irane and Turkey and was awarded the Aspekte literary prize in that same year. Fatah lives in Berlin. Most recently published: *Donnie* (novella, 2002), and the novel *Onkelchen* (*Little Uncle* – 2004).

KATARINA FROSTENSON, born 1953 in Brännkyrka, Sweden, studied literature, film and theatre studies in Stockholm. In 1978 she started publishing poetry in 1978, and became renowned in 1980 with a volume of poetry by the title of *Rena land* (*Clean Country*). In the following years Frostenson developed the Form of the „Monodrama“, a monologue-like collage of words, for the stage as well as radio. 1998 her opera *Staden* (*The City*) was performed on stage (with music by Sven-David Sandström. Frostenson, who also has translated French literature (e.g. by Marguerite Duras and Georges Bataille), was honoured with numerous Prizes and elected to the Swedish Academy in 1992 as the youngest member and the fifth woman ever. She lives in Sweden. Most recently published: *Karkas* (*Carcase* – 2004).

NADINE GORDIMER, born 1923 in South Africa, in Seamus Heaney's words, one of "the guerrillas of the imagination," and the first South African and the 7th woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature (1991). She has written 13 novels, over 200 short stories, and several volumes of essays. 10 books are devoted to her works, and about two hundred critical essays

appear in her bibliography. Few living authors have kept so many academics occupied. Gordimer's works have been translated into more than 30 languages. She was co-founder of the Congress of South African Writers and vice-president of the International PEN and a spokesperson for the UN Development Project to eradicate poverty. She has been awarded 15 honorary doctorates and received major literary prizes. Her latest work is *Loot*, a collection of ten short stories, published in 2004.

DIETER M. GRÄF, born 1960 in Ludwigshafen, studied in Mannheim and became a free-lance writer in 1991. He was honoured with a number of awards of sponsorship and stipends, e.g. in Amsterdam, Berlin, Los Angeles and India. Apart from writing poetry and prose, he also takes part in intermedia projects, such as *Tussirecherche* (Chick Investigation), an installation, together with the project artist Margret Eicher (2000). Gräf was a jury member for the Literarischer März (literary March) in Darmstadt in 1999 and 2001. Dieter M. lives and works in Cologne.

Most recently published: *Westrand. Gedichte* (West Edge. Poems – 2002), *Das leuchtende Buch. Die Welt als Wunder im Gedicht* (The Shining Book. The World as Miracle in Poetry – 2004).

GÜNTER GRASS, born 1927 in Danzig (Gdansk). Air force auxiliary and soldier in the tank corps in World War II, American PoW. Afterwards apprentice stonemason, followed by studies of graphic art and sculpture in Düsseldorf and Berlin. In 1956 he published his first self-illustrated volume of poetry and prose, *Die Vorzüge der Windhühner* (The Virtues of the Windchicken), and in 1959 his first novel, *Die Blechtrommel* (Engl.: *The Tin Drum*, transl. by Krishna Winston), which established his worldwide fame as a writer. Followed by a rapid succession of plays, poems and prose. Starting from the 1960ies, his writing has been throughout influenced by his political commitment, so the play *Die Plebejer proben den Aufstand* (1966 – *The plebeians rehearse*

the uprising, transl. by Ralph Manheim), is a reflection on the national uprising in the GDR on 17th June, 1953, and the novel *Ein weites Feld* (1995 – *Too Far Afield*, transl. by Krishna Winston) is set before the background of the German re-unification. Apart from numerous other literary honourings, honour doctorates and honorary titles, Grass was awarded the Nobel Literary prize in 1999. Most recently published: two volumes of poetry, *Letzte Tänze* (Last Dances – 2003) and *Lyrische Beute* (Lyrical Loot – 2004), *Im Krebsgang* (2004 - Engl.: *Crabwalk*, transl. by Krishna Winston). As a homage to Hans Christian Andersen on his 200th Anniversary in 2005), Grass illustrated *Der Schatten* (The Shadow – 2004), a new edition of Andersen's tales, with 54 lithographs. Günter Grass lives not far from Lübeck.

RONALD HARWOOD, born 1934 in Cape Town, lives in England since 1951 as a British Citizen. Novelist, playwright author of screenplays and non-fiction. From 1989 until 1993 he was President of the English PEN. Seit gehört Harwood has been a member to the Royal Society of Literature since 1974; in 1999 he was appointed Commander of the British Empire. For his screenplay *The Pianist* he won the Academy Award; forthcoming in 2007 is his movie adaptation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' novel *Love in the Time of Cholera*.

GERT HEIDENREICH, born 1944 in Eberswalde, studied in Munich and lives in Upper Bavaria. He writes plays, poems, novels, short prose, and essays; was awarded numerous prizes and honourings, is a member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts and was President of the P.E.N.-Centre of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1991 until 1995. Most recently published: a new version of *Die Steinesammlerin von Etretat* (The pebble collector of Etretat – 2004), a biography of Thomas Gottschalk (2004).

ELEONORA HUMMEL, born 1970 in Kasakhstan, in 1980 her family moved to the North Caucasus, and 1982 to the GDR. Apprentice physicist's laboratory assistant and multilingual secretary for English and Spanish. Published short prose in magazines. 2001 stipend of the 5th Klagenfurt Literature Course. 2002 Baden-Württemberg Cultural and Literary Award of Sponsorship for Ethnic Germans from Russia. At the invitation of the Munich Literature House, she attended the text workshop for novelists (Textwerk) and worked there on her first novel. 2003 literature residency at the Artists' Colony Schöppingen. Eleonora Hummel lives in Dresden. Recently published *Die Fische von Berlin* (The Fish of Berlin - 2005).

DRAGO JANČAR, born 1948 in Maribor, Slovenia. Short prose, novels, plays and Essays with explicitly sociocritical and topical subjects. In 1974 he was arrested. After the political changes in former Yugoslavia he kept up his strong opposition to totalitarianism in any new disguise. Historiophilosophical parabellike prose in the style of essays or novels. Drago Jančar, from 1987 until 1991 President of the slovenian PEN-Club- Apart from many other prizes and honourings he was awarded the France Preùeren Prize, the most important Slovenian literary prize. Jančcar lives in Lubliana. Most recently published: *Northern Lights*, (2000); *Joyce's Pupil* (2006 – both transl. by Michael Biggins).

VICTOR EROFEEV, born 1947 in Moscow. His prose collection *Metropol* (1979) caused a ban on publication for himself and brought his father's career as a senior diplomat to an early end. It was only under the auspices of glasnost and perestroika that Erofeev was allowed to publish again. He is the editor of the first Russian edition of Nabokov as well as a number of anthologies of recent Russian literature. Most recently published: *Choroshi Stalin* (2004 - German: *Der gute Stalin*, transl. by Beate Rausch - 2006; Engl. *The Good Stalin*, transl. by Andrew Bromfield – 2004).

WEND KÄSSENS, born 1947 in Hamburg, studied German language and literature, sociology and theatre studies in Hamburg, worked as theatre dramaturge and publisher's reader, 1981-1991 features editor at Norddeutscher Rundfunk, since 1991 director of the literature department of that radio station. Editor of the complete novels by George Tabori and the autobiographical writings by Paul Nizon. Papers and Essays on theater and literary topics in numerous anthologies. Wend Kässens lives in the Lüneburg Heath.

A.L. KENNEDY, born 1965 in Dundee, Scotland, is one of the most highly noticed writers of Great Britain. For her novels and collections of short stories she was awarded numerous important prizes, such as the Somerset Maugham Award. The writer, film maker and playwright A.L. Kennedy lives in Glasgow. Most recently published: *Paradise* (2004 - German: *Paradies*, transl. by Ingo Herzke - 2005); *Cool Britannia. Junge Literatur aus Großbritannien* (2006 - *Cool Britannia. Young Literature from Great Britain*, anthology ed. by A.L. Kennedy and published only in German).

FRANCIS HENRY KING, born 1923 in Switzerland, grew up in India, where his father worked as a senior government official; educated in England. During the early years of his studies in Oxford he published his first novels. After several years in the diplomatic service in Italy, Greece, Egypt and Finland he decided in 1964, to dedicate all his attention to the writing of prose and poetry. For some years he worked as a theatre and literary critic for the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Spectator*. In 1970 he came out of the closet and confessed to be homosexual. His novel *The Nick of Time* was long-listed for the Man Booker Prize, 2003.

GYÖRGY KONRÁD, born in 1933 to a Jewish family near Debrecen in the East of Hungary; in 1944 he only just escaped

being arrested and deported by the members of the so-called Pfeilkreuzler, the Hungarian fascist party. Together with his siblings he ran away and took refuge with his relatives in Budapest, where he came to live in an apartment, owned by the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. Konrád studied literature, sociology and psychology in Budapest until the Hungarian uprising in 1956. From 1959 until 1965 he worked as an inspector for legal protection for children and young persons at the guardianship office of a municipal district of Budapest and part-time writer of essays. Since 1965 he was a sociologist at the Budapest Institute for Urban Development and Town Planning. 1969 his first novel, *A Látogató* came out (German: *Der Besucher*, transl. by Mario Szenessy – 1999, Engl.: *The Case Worker*, transl. by Paul Aston - 1974). The great success of his literary debut encouraged him to fully concentrate on writing. Next to Václav Havel, Adam Michnik, Milan Kundera and Pavel Kohout he is considered one of the most important voices of opposition before 1989. Konrád was President of the International PEN from 1990 until 1993 and President of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academie of Arts from 1997 until 2003. Most recently published: *Elutazás és hazatérés* (2003 - German: *Glück [Happiness]*) and the autobiographical novel *Napfogyatkozás A Hegyen* (2005 - German: *Sonnenfinsternis auf dem Berg [Sun Eclipse on the Mountain]*), both transl. into German by Hans Henning Paetzke.

URSULA KRECHEL, born 1947 in Trier, studied German, Theatre Studies and Arts' History, Ph.D.; 1969-71 theatre dramaturge. Twelve volumes of poetry, several volumes of prose, essays, Theatre plays. 1989/90 Literary Lectures at the University of Vienna, 1992/93, guest professor in literature at the University of Essen, teaching activities at Warwick University, UK, Washington University, St. Louis, USA, guest professor at the University of Fine Arts, Berlin und at Deutsches Literaturinstitut of the Leipzig University. Lives in Berlin. Most recently published: *Stimmen aus*

dem harten Kern (2005 - Voices from the Bitter Core); Mittelwärts (2006).

ADAM KRZEMINSKI, born 1945 in Radecznica. Germanist, was guest editor of the German weekly „Zeit“ and is considered an expert for German-Polish relations. He is editor of the news magazine Polityka and author of screenplays and essays. He was awarded the Goethe Medal in 1993, and in 1996 the Prize for Essay Writing of the Polish PEN-Club. Krzeminski is Chair of the German-Polish Society, Warsaw. He writes in Polish and German. Most recent publications in German: Polen im 20. Jahrhundert. Historischer Essay. (1993/1998 – Poland in the 20th Century. Historic Essay), Deutsch-polnische Verspiegelung (2001 – German-Polish Mirror Coating). He wrote numerous publications in German newspapers and weekly magazines, as well as scripts for historic and political documentaries.

NORMAN MANEA, born 1936 in the Bukowina, deported to a concentration camp in the Ukrainian Transnistria as an infant, he returned to Romania in 1945, together with other surviving members of his family. Manea studied in Bucharest and worked as a hydraulic engineer. His first literary work was published in 1966 in an avantguard literary magazine that was forbidden afterwards. Since 1974 free-lance writer of sociocritical novels, short prose and essays. In 1984 he was awarded the literary prize of the Romanian Writers' Association, but soon after, under pressure of the governmental culture bureaucracy, denied him again. Plicul negru, his last work published in Romania, caused a severe and long-lasting confrontation with state censorship. In 1987, as a guest of the DAAD in West Berlin, he published his first volume of short prose in Germany, Roboterbiographie und andere Erzählungen (Robot Biographies and Other Stories). Afterwards he went to the USA on a Fulbright fellowship, and has been living and teaching there ever since. Manea was awarded numerous honourings, his works were translated into 15

language. He is a member of the American PEN-Center. Most recently published: *Compulsory Happiness, The Black Envelope* and his autobiography *Intoarcerea huliganului* (Return of the Hooligan, transl. by Angela Jianu - 2003; German: *Die Rückkehr des Hooligan*, transl. by Georg Aescht - 2006).

MARGRIET DE MOOR, born 1941 in Noordwijk, grew up with nine siblings, studied piano and voice solo at the Royal Conservatoire, Den Haag. In 1968 she started a career as classical singer with regular performances of an avant-garde repertory. In the late 1970 she studied arts history and archaeology at the University of Amsterdam. In 1988 her first volume of short prose, *Op de rug gezien* (Seen From Behind; German: *Rückenansicht*, transl. by Rotraud Keller - 1993) was published and awarded the Gouden Ezelsoor (golden dog-ear) as the most best-selling literary debut. Her first and highly praised novel *Eerst grijs dan wit dan blauw* (Engl: *First Grey, then White, then Blue*, trans. by Paul Vincent - 1991; German: *Erst grau, dann weiß, dann blau*, translated by Heike Baryga - 1993), was an international success. Since then, Margriet de Moor has been modelling her two great subjects, music and love, in numerous short prose and novels in many different variations. Most recently published: *Kreutzersonate* (2001 - Engl.: *The Kreutzer Sonata*, trans. by Susan Massotty; German: *Kreutzersonate. Eine Liebesgeschichte*, transl. by Helga van Beuningen), *De verdronkene* (2005 - German: *Sturmflut*, transl. by Helga van Beuningen - 2006).

MEJA MWANGI, born 1948 in Nanyuki/Kenya, is considered the most important writer of his country apart from Ngugi wa Thiong'o. After the considerable success of his first book *Kill me quick* (1973), for which he was awarded the Jomo Kenyatta Award, he set out to work as a free-lance writer in a wide range of genres, such as novels, children's books, films and theatre plays that cover the topical social themes of his country in a very

realistic way. Apart from writing he contributed to important movie projects that were produced in Kenya, such as *Out of Africa*, assisting the director Sydney Pollack (1985). He also wrote the screenplay for the Nigerian movie „Cry Freedom“ (1981). In 1992 he was awarded the German literary prize for young adult fiction for *Little White Man* (German: *Kariuki und sein weißer Freund*, transl. by Jürgen Martini and Helmi Martini-Honus). For one of his most recent works, *The last Plague* (2000 – German: *Die achte Plage*, transl. by Susanne Koehler) he was awarded the Jomo Kenyatta Award a second time. Most recently published: *Happy Valley* (2006 - transl. into German by Thomas Brückner), *The Mzungu Boy* (2006).

PÉTER NÁDAS, born 1942 in Budapest, worked as a photographer for different magazines from 1961 until 1963. In 1965 his first novella was published in a literary magazine. Soon afterwards, Nádas abandoned his career as a professional photographer and set out to work as a free-lance writer. His first novel was longtime banned from publication by censorship. Author of numerous novels, plays and essays. His novel *Emlékiratok könyve* (1986 – Engl.: *A Book of Memories*, transl. by Iwan Sanders and Imre Goldstein – 1997; German: *Buch der Erinnerung*, transl. by Hildegard Grosche - 1991) gained him international renown. Peter Nadas lives in seclusion in a Hungarian village. Most recently published: *Saját Halál* (Engl: *My Own Death*, transl. by Imre Goldstein - 2006; German: *Der eigene Tod*, transl. by Heinrich Eisterer – 2001).

PATRICE NGANANG, born in Yaounde, in Cameroon, in 1970; has published five books of fiction, one collection of poems and two essays. His book *Dog Days*, published in French as *Temps de Chien*, was awarded the Grand prix de la littérature d'Afrique noire in 2003 and the Prix Marguerite Yourcenar in 2002. He is currently an Associate Professor of German and French at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania.

EMINE SEVGI ÖZDAMAR, born 1946 in Turkey. Came to Germany as a young adult because she was interested in German theatre. Worked in a factory in Berlin, studied drama in Istanbul. In the mid-1970ies he worked with Brecht disciple Benno Besson at the East-Berlin Volksbühne as well as in Paris and Avignon. Under Claus Peymann, who commissioned her to write her first play *Karagöz in Alania* (*Schwarzauge in Deutschland – Blackeye in Germany*), she was a member of the ensemble of the Bochumer Schauspielhaus. Since 1990 she has published short prose and several novels. Still working as a theatre and movie actress, the writer Emine Sevgi Özdamar was honoured with a number of literary prizes, such as Adelbert von Chamisso Prize (1999) and Kleist Prize (2004). Özdamar lives in Berlin. Most recently published prose works: *Der Hof im Spiegel* (*The Yard in the Mirror – 2001*) and *Seltsame Sterne starren zur Erde*, (*Strange stars star down at the Earth – 2003*).

LUDMILA PETRUSHEVSKAYA, born 1938 in Moscow, originates from an family of intellectuals who had been exposed to reprisal for generations. After having studied journalism at the Moscow Lomonossov University, she worked as a radio and tv journalist from 1957 until 1973. In the early 1960ies she published first short prose and plays and since the 1990ies, also fairy tales and fanciful narrative prose. Petrushevskaya's stories did not agree with the heroism, demanded by the workers' and peasants' state's leading party and were frequently subject to censorship. It was only under the perestroika, that her prose works and plays could be published. Today she is one of the most well-known Russian writers. In 1995 a complete edition of her works in five volumes was published in Russia. Petrushevskaya lives in Moscow.

SERGIO RAMIREZ, born 1942 Nicaragua. His literary work includes some fifteen books of fiction. He has won the the Dashiell Hammett prize (1990) in Spain for his novel *Castigo*

Divino; the Laure Bataillon Prize (1998) in France for his novel *Un baile de Máscaras*; and the Alfaguara Prize (1998) in Spain and the José María Arguedas Prize in Cuba for his novel *Margarita, está Linda la mar*. Along with other intellectuals he participated in the revolution that overthrew the Somoza dictatorship, and was part of the leadership of that revolution. He has lived and taught literature in Berlin, Washington and Los Angeles. Most recently published in German: *Adios Muchachos* (2001 – transl. by Lutz Kliche, and *Vergeben und vergessen* (Forgiven and Forgotten – 2004).

LESEGO RAMPOLOKENG, born 1965 in Soweto, South Africa, in the district Orlando West, Johannesburg. After the untimely death of his Father, a miner in a platine mine, he was brought up in a staunchly catholic way. In the 1980ies he abandoned his studies of law in Johannesburg and worked in odd jobs. In 1990, first rap poem *Horns for Hondo*. Poems and plays in rapid succession. Rampolokeng combines in his texts the tradition of the Dithoko sprechgesang of the South Africa seSothos with contemporary elements of Rap or Dub. By playing with the musical qualities of language, he has developed a genuine kind of performance poetry. Lesego Rampolokeng lives in Soweto, in the same district of Johannesburg, where he was born and brought up. Most recent poems and CDs: *endbeginnings*, Rap-poems (1998); *Blue V's* (1998); *The h.a.l.f. Ranthology*, Performance-CD (2002), *The second chapter. Poems* (2003) – all of them published in German translations by Thomas Brückner.

ASHER REICH, born 1937 in Jerusalem. He grew up isolated from modern contemporary life in Mea Shearim, the orthodox part of Jerusalem. At the age of eighteen he left his neighbourhood to complete his military service; afterwards he studied Hebrew literature and philosophy at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, worked in Tel Aviv as a journalist and editor at several newspapers, and taught creative writing at the

University of Be'er Sheva. 1980-2002 senior editor of *Moznaim*, the literary magazine of the Israeli Writers' Association. Since 1961 Asher Reich has published 13 volumes of poetry. Apart from poetry he wrote radio plays, short prose and the autobiographical novel *Zichronot Shel Holeh Shichehah* ((Memoirs of a Forgetful Person - 1993) was translated into German. Asher Reich lives in Tel Aviv. Most recently published: *Tel Aviv Impatience* (2000); *Purim. The Jewish Feast of Lots* (2006 - both translated into German by Ruth Achlama).

JEAN ROUAUD, born 1952 in Campbon at the mouth of the river Loire, and worked at a newsagent's in Paris in a paper arbeitete in einem Pariser Zeitungskiosk, until in 1990 his novel *Les Champs d'honneur* (Engl.: *The Fields of Glory*, transl. by Ralph Manheim - 1992; German: *Die Felder the Ehre*, transl. by Carina v. Enzenberg and Hartmut Zahn - 1993) made him famous overnight. Meanwhile he wrote five novels and numerous books on arts and literature and is published in more than 20 languages, e.g. *Le Monde À Peut Près* (Engl.: *The World, More or Less*, transl. by Barbara Wright - 1998). The French newspaper *Le Monde* elected him one of the "Twenty-one Thinkers, who contribute to the Understanding of the 21st century". His most recent book *L'Imitation du Bonheur* (2006) had an enthusiastic reception in France.

SAID, born 1947 in Teheran, has been living in Munich since 1965 and is a German writer. In 1979, after the Shah's downfall, he visited his home country, but under the Mullah regime he didn't see a chance for staying. So, the exile came back to Germany, his „foreign home“. From 2000 to 2002, SAID was the president of the German P.E.N.-Centre. Most recent publications: *Landschaften einer fernen Mutter* [Landscapes of a distant mother] (2001), the narrative *Außenhaut Binnenträume* [Outward skin inward dreams] (2002) as well as *ich und der islam* [Myself and the Islam] (2005). For his commitment to the

cause of politically persecuted writers SAID was honoured with the Hermann Kesten-Medal in 1997. Most recently published: *In Deutschland leben* (Living in Germany – 2004), *Ich und der Islam* (Me and Islam – 2005).

TOMAŽ ŠALAMUN, born 1941 in Zagreb, Yugoslavia; studied history and arts history at the University of Lubiana, worked with the literary magazine *Perspektive*, where his first poems were published. 1964, first volume of poetry; assistant for arts history at the university, 1968-69 curator at the „Moderna Galerija“ in Ljubiana. Concept and environment artist. In 1986 Fulbright Fellowship at Columbia University, New York, 1996-1999 cultural attaché to the Slovenian Consulate in New York; in 2001 he was visiting professor for creative writing at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. His poems were translated into 12 languages. Most recently published in English: *Blackboards* (2004) and *The Book for My Brother* (2006), both translated by Michael Biggins; in German: *Ballade für Metka Krašovec* (2005) und *Lesen: Lieben. Gedichte aus vier Jahrzehnten* (2006), both translated by Fabjan Hafner.

SHI MING, born 1957 in Beijing, intellectual family background, his father was an architect and his mother a university teacher. Both parents were deported during the Cultural Revolution. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, Shi Ming studied German and Law at the Second Foreign Languages University of Beijing until the early 1980ies. Afterwards he worked for four years as an announcer and then as a journalist for a governmental radio station. On his second visit to Cologne in 1987 as a representative of a big Chinese state-owned company, he decided to stay in Germany as an exile. Since 1990 he has been working as a journalist for various radio stations and newspapers. Shi Ming started writing literary texts, radio prose, satires and essays in 1989. Most recently published: *Wie Weiches über Hartes siegt. Die hohe Schule der Kampfkunst* (How the Soft

Defeats the Firm. The Haute École of the Art of Self-Defence – 2003).

HAROON SIDDIQUI, born 1942 in Hyderabad, India, studied journalism at the local Osmania University, worked as a reporter and copy editor at the Press Trust of India, emigrated to Toronto, Canada, in 1967. From 1968 until 1978 Haroon Siddiqui worked at the „Brandon Sun“ in Brandon, Manitoba, then changed to the „Toronto Star“ and was appointed editor and senior analyst for foreign affairs in 1979. From 1990 until his retirement in 1998 he was editor in charge for the editorials. Since 1998 Haroon Siddiqui writes editorials on national and international politics as well as cultural and religious topics on a regular basis. Siddiqui was President of the Canadian PEN. Most recently published: Being Muslim. Groundwork Guides (2006).

HAMID SKIF, born 1951 in Oran as Mohamed Benmebkhout, worked as a journalist, who stood up for unbiased coverage. After a period in prison in the early seventies, he continued his work as a publicist. At the same time he wrote poetry about such topoi as nature, desert, youth. After his house and the office of his newspaper were target of bomb attacks, he escaped to Germany in 1997, where he lives now as a Fellow to the PEN Writers in exile programme. Skif writes in French. Most recently published: Monsieur le Président (2002 – German: Sehr geehrter Herr Präsident. Roman in Briefen, transl. by Linde Birk), Les Exilés du Matin. Lettres d’Absence. Poems (Exiles of Dawn. Letters of an Absent Person; German: Exile der Frühe. Briefe eines Abwesenden, translated by Andreas Münzer – 2005).

JOHANO STRASSER, born 1939 in Leeuwarden (Netherlands). 1967 Ph.D. in philosophy, 1977 habilitation in political science at FU Berlin. 1980-1988 member of the editorial staff and co-editor of the political-literary magazine „L’80“. Since 1983 freelance writer, since 1995 General Sekretary first of the West German,

then of the German P.E.N. Since 2002 Chair of German P.E.N.-Centre. Published numerous non-fiction books, novels, radio and theatre plays and poems: Most recently published: Bei Regen über Regen reden (Talking about Rain in the Rain, poems - 2000); Leben oder Überleben. Wider die Zurichtung des Menschen zu einem Element des Marktes (Against the Trimming of Man as an Element of the Market - 2001); Kopf oder Zahl. Die Intellektuellen vor der Entscheidung (2005 - Heads or Tails. The Intellectual Facing Decision).

ANNA T. SZABÓ, poet, essayist, translator. Born 1972 in Romania, lives in Hungary since 1987, studied English and Hungarian at the University of Budapest. At the age of 23 she published her first volume of poetry, that was awarded the Petöfi Prize. Meanwhile, she has published three more volumes of poetry and received numerous honourings and stipends. Anna T. Szabó translates poetry, prose and plays and works as a publicist and critic. From 2002 until 2004 she wrote movie reviews for CINEMA. Today, she lives as a free-lance writer and translator in Budapest. Apart from poetry she also published a libretto and a play. Presently, she is working on her new volume of poetry.

VÉRONIQUE TADJO, born 1955 in Paris, grew up in Ivory Coast, from where her father originates. Studied literature at the University of Abidjan, Ph.D. in Paris at the Sorbonne on Afro-American literature and culture. In 1983 she was a Fulbright-Fellow at the Howard University in Washington, D.C., afterwards (until 1993) university teacher in Abidjan. In 1984 Tadjó's first volume of poetry *Latérite* was published which gained her the literary prize of the Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique, and was followed by three novels in the early 1990ies. She is known to a broader public because of her children's books, some of which she has also illustrated herself. She also held writing and illustration workshops for young adults in Mali, Benin, Tchad, Haiti and Mauritius. After periodic

residencies in Paris, Lagos, Mexico-City and Nairobi, she now lives in London. Most recently published: *Ne me laisse pas mourir. Poems* (undated), *L'Ombre d'Imana. Voyages jusqu'au bout du Rwanda* (2000 – Engl.: *The Shadow of Imana. Travels in the heart of Rwanda*, transl. by Véronique Wakerly, German: *Der Schatten Gottes. Reise ans Ende Ruandas* – 2001).

YOKO TAWADA, born 1960 in Tokio, studied literature with main emphasis on Russian literature, and, starting from 1982, new German literature in Hamburg. Ph.D. on "Plaything and Magic of Language in the European Literature". Since 1987, poetry and prose in German and Japanese. 1993 she was awarded the Akutagawa-Sho, the most renowned Japanese literary prize, for her novella *Inumukoiri* (*The Bridegroom was a Dog*, transl. by Margret Mitsutami - 2003), that is contained in her volume *Tintenfisch auf Reisen* (*Travelling Octopus* - 1994). In 1996 she was awarded the Adalbert von Chamisso Prize. From her cooperation with the jazz pianist Aki Takase resulted so far in one CD. Yoko Tawada lives in Hamburg and Tokio. Most recently published: *Überseetzungen*, (2002); *Wo Europa anfängt* (1991 - Engl. *Where Europe Begins*, transl. by Susan Bernofsky and Yumi Selden – 2002); *Was ändert der Regen an unserem Leben* (*How Does the Rain Change Our Lives* – 2005).

ILJA TROYANOW, born 1965 in Bulgaria, when he was a child, his family escaped to the West and was granted political asylum in Germany. Here, apart from other things, he wrote a science-fiction novel and edited *Döner in Walhalla*, one of the first anthologies of migrants' literature. Trojanow lived in Bombay, and lives in Cape Town, now. Most recently published: *Zu den heiligen Quellen des Islam* (*To the Healing Springs of Islam* - 2004) *Along the Ganga. To the Inner Shores of India* (2005), and the novel *Der Weltensammler* (*Collector of Worlds* – 2006). Trojanov was awarded the Adalbert von Chamisso Prize in 2000 and the Leipzig Books Award in 2006.

LUDMILA ULITSKAYA, born 1943, during the evacuation of the Ural, grown up in Moscow, studied biology and worked as a geneticist at the Moscow Academy of Sciences and fired in 1969 for having prepared the publication of samizdat literature. Dramaturge at the Jewish Chamber Theatre. Afterwards she wrote plays, screenplays, newspaper articles, contributions to exhibition catalogues and worked as a translator. It was only by the detour via France, where in the 1980ies some of her short prose was first published, that Ulitskaya gained attention in her own country, too. For the novella *Sonechka* (1992 - transl. into English by Arch Tait), her international breakthrough, she was awarded the Prix Médicis in 1996. Most recently published: *Medea and Her Children* (2004 - transl. by Arch Tait).

DUBRAVKA UGREŠIĆ is the author of several novels, short story collections and essays. Her books – *The Ministry of Pain*, *Lend Me Your Character*, *Thank You For Not Reading*, *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, *The Culture of Lies*, *Have A Nice Day*, *In the Jaws of Life and Other Stories*, *Fording the Stream of Consciousness* – have been translated in many European languages and won several international literary awards. Born 1949 in Zagreb and raised in former Yugoslavia (Croatia) she currently lives in Amsterdam.

HERBERT WIESNER, born 1937, grew up in Düsseldorf; 1958-1985 he lived, studied and worked in Munich; university lecturer, critic, journalist, encyclopaedia editor, author of literary TV features; 1985-2003 co-founder and director of "Berliner Literaturhaus", the 1st German literature house, editor and co-author of vols. 1-14 of *Texte aus dem Literaturhaus Berlin*; curator of literary exhibitions. Since 1996 member of the board of West German and German P.E.N. Chair of the literary programme of the 72nd International P.E.N. Congress. 2005 Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. He lives in Berlin.

ROGER WILLEMSSEN, born in Bonn, studied German, philosophy and arts history in Bonn, Florence, Munich and Vienna. 1984 Ph.D., afterwards assistant for literary studies at the Munich university. Free-lance author, essayist, correspondent in London. Since 1991, interviews for and moderation of tv culture programmes, film portraits. Since 1993, programmes of his own production firm NOA-NOA. Since 2002, apart from film projects and his commitment for human rights, focus on literary works. Most recently published: *Afghanische Reise* (2006 – Afghan Voyage); *Hier spricht Guantánamo* (2006 – This is Guantánamo Speaking).

FRANK WOLFF, born 1945 in Hestia, has been playing Cello since his childhood. He studied musik in Freiburg and philosophy with Adorno in Frankfurt. In 1967 one of the voices of the students' revolt. Played Cello in an avant-garde ensemble and in a Berlin string quartet. Returned to Frankfurt in the so-called German Autumn of 1977, where he created first concert collages. In 1981 the Frankfurter Kurorchester (Frankfurt Spa Orchestra) was founded as a rock band, chamber, ensemble and chaos theatre; travels from New York to Peking. In 1997 world trip with Anne Bärenz. Duo-projects, most recently, *Unplugged and Play on*; apart from that in a trio with Robert Gernhardt, among other works *Der Ton im Wörtersee*. In various solo projects, such as *Mein blaues Cello* (My Blue Cello), creation of a poetic tone painting with new sounds and overtone techniques.

ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI, born 1945 in the then Polish city of Lemberg (Lwów/Lwiw); studied psychologie and philosophy in Kraków, before he devoted himself to literature. He published poetry, essays and a novel, until in 1976 the government banned the publication of his works, due to his oppositional activities. Zagajewski was a member of the civil rights movement KOR. In 1979 he came to West-Berlin and proceeded to the USA and France, where he settled down in 1982 to live in Paris.

Zagajewski is considered one of the most important authors of the contemporary Polish literature. His works are highly acknowledged in the German speaking countries, too, especially his political poems and essays, which may well be understood as an homage to the unity of the European continent and a breaching of the gaps between the east and west European and the American worlds. In 2002 he was awarded the Konrad Adenauer Prize. Most recently published in English: *Without End: New and Selected Poems* (transl. by Clare Cavanagh and Renata Gorczynski – 2001); *Two Cities: On Exile, History, and the Imagination*, transl. by Lillian Vallee – 2002), *A Defense of Ardor: Essays*, transl. by Clare Cavanagh – 2004).

OLEG ZAYONCHKOVSKI, born 1959 in Kuibyshev (now Samara) as descendant of an old aristocratic family, lives in a small town (Khotkovo) near Moscow. He worked first as a metalworker in a test factory for rocket engines and then as a mechanic for washers, vacuum cleaners and other household gadgets and wrote in his spare time. In 2004 his novel *Sergeev and the City* was published in the Russian original and immediately nominated for the Booker Prize – Open Russia, 2004 as well as the “National Bestseller, 2005). In 2005 his second novel, *Petrovich*, came out and was also nominated for the Russian Booker Prize. His play *Where there is love, there is God, too*” was published in the literary and philosophical magazine *Topos*. A volume of short prose and another novel are forthcoming. Ludmilla Petrushevskaya said about him: “Zayonchkovsky – he’s bright, he loves man and as a witty style of writing. He is like Fasil Iskander or Faulkner (or Joyce around the time, when he wrote *Dubliners*). He has created his own warmhearted, smart and not too boozy little crowd (which does not and cannot exist in reality).

RICHARD ZIMLER, born 1956 in Manhasset, upstate New York. Studied comparative theology at Duke University and journalism

at Stanford and then worked as a journalist for eight years. In 1990 he moved to Portugal, where he presently teaches journalism at the University of Porto. He also works as a critic for the L.A. Times and The Literary Review. During the last few years, he published about tow dozens of short stories and three novels and was awarded various prizes. Most recent publications: Unholy Ghosts (1996), The Angelic Darkness (2000), The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon (1997 – German: Der letzte Kabbalist von Lissabon - 1997), Honey and Poison. Selected Poems – together with Petro Tamen (2002), Guardian of the Dawn (2005).

The German P.E.N. Centre

The P.E.N.-Zentrum Deutschland ist the German Section of the international association of writers foundet in 1921. The International P.E.N. Centre has long established itself as a voice speaking out for persecuted and suppressed writers and as a defender of the right to freedom of speech. The three initials of P.E.N. stand for Poets, Essayists, and Novelists.

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