



MARCH 2-5, 2017

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"QUEER AS VOLK" IS THE THEME FOR 8th ANNUAL FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR, MARCH 2-5, FEATURING FREE LITERARY EVENTS WITH HIGH-PROFILE GERMAN AND AMERICAN AUTHORS



Darryl Pinckney, Francine Prose, Rivka Galchen, John Keene, Susan Bernofsky, Garth Greenwell, William Johnson, Tess Lewis and Geoff Mak join German-language writers Jürgen Bauer, Zora del Buono, Simon Froehling, Fabian Hischmann, Marlen Schachinger, and Antje Rávic Strubel for conversations on books, politics and culture across the city.

New York, February 7, 2017 – [Festival Neue Literatur](#), the first and only festival to spotlight German-language and American fiction together, will take place **March 2 - 5**, at venues throughout New York City. The theme of the 2017 festival, curated by **Peter Blackstock**, senior editor at Grove Atlantic, is **"Queer as Volk."** As queer people face a hazardous political climate both in the United

States and in Europe, stories about the LGBTQ community become all the more critical. As do the questions: How do queer stories reach readers? To what extent is gay writing still subversive? And how do we ensure that the stories of LGBTQ people are told in a time of rising reactionary sentiment?

The celebrated American novelist Garth Greenwell will be the chair of Festival Neue Literatur 2017. "Part of what has always been exciting and unsettling about queerness is the way it can serve as a point of contact and affiliation across the usual categories — of nation, race, class, language — by which we organize our lives," he says. "This is something queer artists and writers have always celebrated, and it is something we need very much to remember and reaffirm now. I'm immensely excited for the conversations and encounters the Festival Neue Literatur will enable this year."

This will be the eighth installment of Festival Neue Literatur, where New York City once again hosts six of the most important authors from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, along with celebrated voices in American literature and culture. The festival's German-language authors are tremendous voices in the European literary world, but their work still remains to be discovered by many U.S. readers.

The 2017 festival features the following authors: **Jürgen Bauer** and **Marlen Schachinger** (Austria); **Fabian Hischmann** and **Antje Rávic Strubel** (Germany); **Zora del Buono** and **Simon Froehling** (Switzerland); and **Darryl Pinckney** and **Francine Prose** (United States).

The works of fiction featured at this year's festival celebrate the diversity of LGBTQ experiences. From the coming-of-age story of a young bisexual man living in the Black Forest, to a novel exploring the lives of lesbian and gay people in Austria during the Nazi period, to the tale of a Swiss couple reeling from a positive HIV diagnosis, the featured works form a cross-section of the LGBTQ spectrum. Simultaneously joyous, heart-wrenching, sexual and radical, these books showcase queer experiences with deep emotion and great literary flair.

Every winter, the festival pairs the six visiting authors with two U.S. authors, bringing diverse perspectives and sensibilities into an excitingly dynamic intercultural conversation. The 2017 festival will proudly feature two celebrated American novelists, **Darryl Pinckney**, Whiting Award-winning author of *Black Deutschland*, and **Francine Prose**, award-winning author of a number of novels, including *Lovers at the Chameleon Club*. This year's moderators include award-winning translator **Tess Lewis**, **Geoff Mak** of *The Offing* magazine, and **William Johnson** of Lambda Literary. Past moderators have included Siri Hustvedt, John Wray, and Liesl Schillinger.

The festival's signature translation event returns and takes on the theme "Translation at the Margins" in an effort to showcase the importance of translating minority voices, including those of LGBTQ writers, writers of color, women writers, as well as spotlighting literature from countries recently targeted by the immigration ban, including Iran and Iraq. This year's event will feature acclaimed authors John Keene and Rivka Galchen, as well as celebrated translators Susan Bernofsky and Sara Khalili, and many more.

The Friedrich Ulfers Prize will be presented at the festival's opening ceremony on March 2 to **Barbara Epler**, publisher and president of New Directions. The prize is endowed with a \$5,000 grant and honors a publisher, writer, critic, translator, or scholar who has championed the advancement of German-language literature in the United States. Previous recipients of the Friedrich Ulfers Prize include **Burton Pike**, **Robert Weil**, **Sara Bershtel**, and **Carol Brown Janeway**.

Each year, the festival publishes the **FNL Reader**, a booklet featuring English-language excerpts of the featured German-language works, often marking the first appearance of these texts in English. The 2017 FNL Reader (Volume 7) will be available for download in an electronic version on the festival website at www.festivalneueliteratur.org.

FNL 2017 EVENTS LINE-UP

All FNL events are free and in English. RSVPs are required due to limited seating:

rsvp@festivalneueliteratur.org | <http://bit.ly/queerasvolk> | <https://www.facebook.com/events/375764446118285>

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 6PM

Austrian Cultural Forum New York (11 East 52nd Street, Manhattan)

Words with Writers

New York's brightest students take on FNL authors in a lightning round of literary interviews.

Featuring all six German-language authors and moderated by festival curator Peter Blackstock.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 12PM

Bowery Poetry Club (308 Bowery, Manhattan)

Translation at the Margins

Join Festival Neue Literatur for an intimate conversation about literature in translation with NYC's celebrated literary editors, translators, and writers, who will discuss the importance of translating the voices of marginalized writers including LGBTQ individuals, people of color and women, as well as voices of writers from countries affected by the U.S. immigration ban.

Featuring Susan Bernofsky, Rivka Galchen, John Keene, Sara Khalili, and more.

Moderated by translator and Guggenheim Fellow Tess Lewis.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 6-8PM

POWERHOUSE (28 Adams Street, Brooklyn)

Born This Way: Writing the Personal

As Virginia Woolf put it in *A Room of One's Own*: "Sometimes women do like women." Bringing queer stories to a straight world is a task that often falls to LGBTQ writers. But should LGBTQ writers feel an obligation to write fiction inspired by their own experiences? This panel explores the burdens of representation and the role of personal and literary influences, showing how LGBTQ lives come into

literature.

Featuring authors Zora del Buono, Antje Rávic Strubel, and Jürgen Bauer, and Darryl Pinckney, and moderated by Geoff Mak of The Offing Magazine.

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2PM

Deutsches Haus at NYU (42 Washington Mews, Manhattan)

The Author's Voice

The six German-language authors of Festival Neue Literatur pair up with NYC actors to give a sampling from their work, providing a taste of new writing from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.

Featuring all six German-language authors and moderated by festival curator Peter Blackstock.

English Excerpts read by actors.

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 6PM

McNally Jackson (52 Prince Street, Manhattan)

Silence Is Violence: LGBTQ Writing in A Fracturing Political Climate

Larry Kramer once said: "I don't consider myself an artist. I consider myself a very opinionated man who uses words as fighting tools." This panel promises a lively discussion of the intersection between LGBTQ writing and politics, from HIV/AIDS activism, to class and race identity, to gay persecution both historical and contemporary, exploring what it means to be a sexual minority in today's political climate.

Featuring Marlen Schachinger, Simon Froehling, Fabian Hischmann, and Francine Prose, and moderated by William Johnson of Lambda Literary.

ABOUT FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR:

Festival Neue Literatur (FNL) was established as a collaborative project of New York's leading German-language cultural institutions: the Austrian Cultural Forum, the German Consulate General New York, the Consulate General of Switzerland, Deutsches Haus at Columbia University, Deutsches Haus at NYU, the Frankfurt Book Fair New York (formerly the German Book Office New York), the Goethe-Institut New York, and Pro Helvetia.

All FNL events are free of charge, though RSVPs are required. The 2017 festival will take place from March 2 to 5, 2016.

Festival Neue Literatur 2017 is made possible through generous support from BMW of North America, Radeberger Pilsner, and the German Foreign Office.