

LYRIKEDITION 2000

founded by Heinz Ludwig Arnold[†]

published by Florian Voß

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LUDWIG STEINHERR was born in Munich (Germany) in 1962. He studied philosophy and earned a PhD after submitting a dissertation on Hegel and Quine. He lives in Munich. For the twelve books of poetry that have been published so far, he has received various awards, such as the prestigious *Leonce-und-Lena-Förderpreis*, the Book Award of the Evangelical Churches in Germany, and the *Hermann-Hesse-Förderpreis*. Since 2003, Steinherr is a member of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts. His work has been translated into multiple languages. He has been invited to various internationally acclaimed literary festivals, such as the *Journées Littéraires de Mondorf* (Luxembourg), *German-Arabian Poetry Salon* in Damascus (Syria), as well as the *European Literature Night* in London, *StAnza - Scotland's International Poetry Festival*, and the *Birmingham Literature Festival*. In 2012, he was lecturer at the University of Notre Dame (USA) in the *Advanced Lecture Series*.

Recent publications include »Das Mädchen Der Maler Ich. Collected Poems« (2012), »Ganz Ohr« (Lyrikedition 2000, 2012) and »Flüstergalerie« (2013). Along with »All Ears«, »Before the Invention of Paradise« (Arc Publications, 2010) is also available in English translation.

PAUL-HENRI CAMPBELL was born in Boston (MA) in 1982. He is a bilingual poet and translator and lives in Cologne, Germany. Campbell is the co-editor of the annual anthology »DAS GEDICHT chapbook. German Poetry Now.« Recent publications include: »Space Race. Poems|Gedichte« (2012) as well as »Am Ende der Zeilen | At the End of Days« (2013).

Ludwig Steinherr

All Ears

Poetry

Translated and supplemented with an essay
by Paul-Henri Campbell

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EDITION
2000

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THE SECRET DOMINION

GEHEIME WELT

THE SECRET DOMINION

Turn off the light
and cloaked in darkness a mad party begins –

Wonder what they're up to in the dark
sofa coffee table pictures shelves
every which way –

mystic drinking sprees
metaphysical orgies of which you
haven't got the faintest idea –

Only if you drowsily stagger
into the living room
touching the light switch –

The startled look of the floor lamp
as though it just had been
traversing sun moon and stars making out
with an archangel

GARDEN IN THE NIGHT
WHEN NOBODY IS WATCHING

The hour at which every bush
begins to be fragrant with the odor of
a lady's shawl left behind on the terrace

The hour at which the ants are searching for a signal
from the star that radio controls them

The hour at which the heartbeat in the trees pauses

until some cat's sudden shriek reanimates it

The hour at which Love's spell showers down
from every bough and twig and drives them crazy
only them: the grass and the bugs

The hour at which the first newspapers are delivered
still damp from the black blood – and every letter
an Apocalyptic Horseman

The hour at which Anubis God of the Dead
forces his jackal head through the fence
and wanders through his territory

WHILE BREWING STRONG COFFEE

This afternoon is a fly
locked up in Caravaggio's cranium –

I hear it buzzing
a gorgeous impetuous blow-fly
one only the Baroque period could birth:
glistening with every shade and hue of sin

It nips at the painted wine goblet
sucks on the pallid nipple
of the juvenile Bacchus – in vain

It crawls over the callow skull of Abraham
and is now scuttling across Judith's décolleté
as though it were following the scent of blood
from one assassination scene to another –

But it is already in flight again
entering deeper into the dark labyrinth of the atelier
losing its bearings amongst the stretched canvases:
hurried drafts
glowing scenes that haven't been created yet
paintings that Caravaggio will never paint
but still exist –

just like the fly that nobody sees
with only its deep hum audible
as it teeters on
from light to darkness
from darkness to light
intoxicated
by the bewitching scent
of fresh crimson paint
as though taken from the slaughterhouse

IN THE DARKNESS YOUR THIRD
SHOULDER BLADE

IM DUNKELN DEIN DRITTES
SCHULTERBLATT