

Fellows



Ilija Trojanow

IFK_Writer in Residence

Duration of fellowship

01. March 2018 bis 30. June 2018

Ilija Trojanow

PROJECT TITLE

What if – an utopian novel

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

We live in apocalyptic times. We keep dystopias as we keep pets: the end of the world as Will and Representation. This has to be countered through literary means by presenting a utopia that can be taken seriously; the first in decades. But, because the utopian genre, as a “sociology of the fantastic”, is often considered dry and schematic, this novel will use the narrative vehicle of time travel to connect the world of the future with the past which is (mostly) familiar to us. The negative aspects of this journey will show us the insanity of the social, economic and political forms of existence we have chosen, as well as present us with the possible alternatives. The four periods are: Pirates in the Caribbean in 1720, Fanny Kaplan’s assassination attempt on Lenin in Moscow in 1918, the Olympic Games in Sarajevo in 1984 and religious extremism in the Bombay of the present. Each one of these time periods will make use of a certain genre and shall also be stylistically different. A number of central questions facing humanity will be dealt with in a playful and expressive manner.

CV

Ilija Trojanow was born in Bulgaria in 1965. In 1971, his parents fled to Munich with him, where they received political asylum. Trojanow also lived in Kenya and Nairobi, and he studied Law, Ethnology and “Derailment” at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. In 1998, Trojanow moved to Bombay. During a stay in Mainz as writer in residence (*Mainzer Stadtschreiber*) in 2007, he produced the film *Vorwärts und nie vergessen – Ballade über bulgarische Helden* for the ZDF. Since 2008, Trojanow has edited the series *Weltlese – Lesereisen ins Unbekannte*, and in 2009, he wrote the book *Angriff auf die Freiheit. Sicherheitswahn, Überwachungsstaat und der Abbau bürgerlicher Rechte* in cooperation with Juli Zeh. In 2010, Trojanow curated the first Munich Literature Festival, and between 2013 and 2014, he curated and moderated a series of talks and conversations entitled *Weltausstellung Prinzenstraße* at the Schauspiel Hannover. Since 2014, Trojanow has written for the *derStandard.at*-blog *Operama*.

During the summer term of 2007, Trojanow held the Heiner Müller Visiting Professorship at the Free University of Berlin, and during the winter term, he co-lectured with Feridun Zaimoğlu at the Tübingen Poetics Lectureship on the topic *Ferne Nähe*. In 2009-2010, he accepted a Visiting Professorship at the German Institute for Literature in Leipzig; in 2012, he was invited to the Max Kade Center for Contemporary German Literature at the Washington University in St. Louis as a writer-in-residence. In 2013, he held the Stefan Zweig Poetics Lecture at the University of Salzburg; in 2014, he accepted the Brüder Grimm Visiting Professorship at the University of Kassel; and in the spring of 2016, he was invited to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire as a Max Kade Visiting Professor.

Ilija Trojanow received several literary prizes, including the Bertelsmann Literary Prize in 1995, the Marburg Literary Prize in 1996, the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize in 2000, the Berlin Prize for Literature in 2007, the *Mainzer Stadtschreiber* Literary Award in 2007, the *Preis der Literaturhäuser* in 2009, the Würth Prize for European Literature in 2010, the Carl Amery Literary Prize in 2011, and the Heinrich Böll Literary Prize in 2017.

Publications

Publikationen (u. a.): *Meine Olympiade. Ein Amateur, vier Jahre, 80 Disziplinen*, Frankfurt / Main 2016; *Macht und Widerstand*, Frankfurt / Main 2016; *Wo Orpheus begraben liegt*, München 2013; *EisTau*, München 2011; *Der Weltensammler*, München 2006.

