

Writing about the New Germany

A panel discussion with

Jenny Erpenbeck

Ulrich Peltzer

Julia Schoch

Chaired by

Karen Leeder, New College Oxford

Location: Goethe Institute Irland, 37 Merrion Square

Date: Friday 23 October 2009

Time: 17.00

Admission: free

Jenny Erpenbeck

Jenny Erpenbeck (born in 1967) is an acclaimed German author who has won a number of prestigious literary prizes, including the Preis der Jury beim Ingeborg-Bachmann-Wettbewerb in Klagenfurt in 2001, the Solothurner Literaturpreis in 2008, and the Preis der LiteraTour Nord in 2009.

She is the daughter of the physicist, philosopher and author John Erpenbeck and the translator for Arabic Doris Kiliass. On completion of secondary school in 1985 Jenny Erpenbeck trained as a bookbinder. She worked for various theatres helping with stage sets and costumes before studying drama at the Humboldt-University in Berlin from 1988 to 1990. However, she also studied directing for opera and musical theatre under Ruth Berghaus, Heiner Müller, Peter Konwitschny at the conservatoire "Hanns Eisler" Berlin. After graduating she first worked as assistant director at the opera house in Graz before directing her own productions at the same place. Since then she has been a production director at various theatres in Germany and Austria. Apart from her work for the theatre, Jenny Erpenbeck is a writer of prose and plays. Her acclaimed 2008 novel *Heimsuchung* (The Visitation) is set in a house on a lake in Brandenburg, the haunted location of the life stories of 12 characters.

Other works include:

Geschichte vom alten Kind. 1999.

Tand. Erzählungen. 2001.

Wörterbuch. 2004.

Ulrich Peltzer

Ulrich Peltzer (born in Krefeld in 1956) studied philosophy and social psychology in Berlin from 1975 until 1982. Since the early 1980s he has established himself as a leading writer of city novels, as evident in his four Berlin novels and one further narrative which is set in New York (*Bryant Park*). Peltzer rejects conventional realism in favour of inner monologue and a stream-of-consciousness. In his 2007 novel *Teil der Lösung* (Part of the Solution) he interweaves a breathtaking love story with the story of new, radicalised political movements which aim to fight the effects of globalisation. He is the recipient of many prestigious literary prizes, including the 1992 Bertelsmann-Stipendium beim Ingeborg-Bachmann-Wettbewerb in Klagenfurt,

the 1996 Berliner Literaturpreis der Stiftung Preußische Seehandlung , the 2003 Bremer Literaturpreis and the 2008 Berliner Literaturpreis für sein Gesamtwerk (for lifetime achievement)

His works include:

Die Sünden der Faulheit. Roman. 1987.

Stefan Martinez. 1995.

Alle oder keiner. 1999.

Bryant Park. Erzählung. 2002.

JULIA SCHOCH

Julia Schoch (born in 1974 in Bad Saarow) grew up in eastern Mecklenburg as the daughter of an officer of the East German Army (the NVA) and of a bookseller. In 1986 the family moved to Potsdam where Schoch attended a college for physical education from 1987 to 1989. She then studied German and French in Potsdam, Paris and Bucharest. From 2000 to 2003 she taught French literature at the University of Potsdam. Since 2003 she has worked as a freelance author and translator.

In 2009 her acclaimed novel *Mit der Geschwindigkeit des Sommers* (With the Speed of the Summer) was published. In this work Schoch tells the story of an East-German woman who lived in a small town close to the border of Poland and who committed suicide. The novel narrates the experience of the end of the GDR from a finely nuanced and intimate perspective. Schoch's work has been recognized by a number of prizes and awards, including the 2001 Förderpreis zum Brandenburgischen Literaturpreis, the 2002 Förderpreis zum Friedrich-Hölderlin-Preis der Stadt Bad Homburg, the 2005 Preis der Jury beim Ingeborg-Bachmann-Wettbewerb.

Other works include:

Der Körper des Salamanders. 2001.

Verabredungen mit Mattok. Roman. 2004.

Steltz & Brezoianu. Prosaminiaturen. 2007.