

Correction Thomas Bernhard

The narrator, a scientist working on antibodies and suffering from emotional and mental illness, meets a Persian woman, the companion of a Swiss engineer, at an office in rural Austria. For the scientist, his endless talks with the strange Asian woman mean release from his condition, but for the Persian woman, as her own circumstances deteriorate, there is only one answer. "Thomas Bernhard was one of the few major writers of the second half of this century."—Gabriel Josipovici, *Independent* "With his death, European letters lost one of its most perceptive, uncompromising voices since the war."—*Spectator* Widely acclaimed as a novelist, playwright, and poet, Thomas Bernhard (1931-89) won many of the most prestigious literary prizes of Europe, including the Austrian State Prize, the Bremen and Brüchner prizes, and Le Prix Séguier.

Instead of the book he's meant to write, Rudolph, a Viennese musicologist, produces this dark and grotesquely funny account of small woes writ large, of profound horrors detailed and rehearsed to the point of distraction. We learn of Rudolph's sister, whose help he invites, then reviles as malevolent meddling; his 'really marvelous' house, which he hates; the suspicious illness he carefully nurses; his ten-year-long attempt to write the perfect opening sentence; and, finally, his escape to the island of Majorca, which turns out to be the site of someone else's very real horror story. A brilliant and haunting tale of procrastination, failure, and despair, *Concrete* is a perfect example of why Thomas Bernhard is remembered as "one of the masters of contemporary European fiction" (George Steiner).

Thomas Bernhard (1931-1989), a literary figure of international acclaim and arguably Austria's greatest post-World War II writer, became the first of his generation to expose unrelentingly his country's pathological denial of complicity in the Holocaust. Bernhard's writings and indeed his own biography reflect Austria's fraught efforts to define itself as a nation following the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the trauma of World War II. Repeatedly he scandalized the nation with novels, plays, and public statements that exposed the convoluted ways Austrians were attempting to come to terms with their Nazi past--or defiantly avoiding doing so. This book, the first comprehensive biography of Thomas Bernhard in English, examines his life and work and their intricate relationship to Austria's geographical, political, and cultural transformations in the twentieth century. While Bernhard was the scourge of his native culture, Honegger explains, he was also a product of that same culture. Appreciation of his controversial impact on his society is possible only through an understanding of the contradictions, the shame, and the achievements that mark Austrians' self-perception in the postwar years. Honegger shows that for Bernhard the theater was not only a profession but also a paradigm for his life, and that performance was the primary force animating his writing and self-construction. Even after his death, Bernhard's carefully constructed biography continues to fascinate, shock, and expose the Austrian culture at large.

Three novellas by the European novelist--Amras, *Playing Watten*, and *Walking*--explore the psychological crisis precipitated by modern life, with two being translated into English for the first time. (General Fiction)

The scientist Roithamer has dedicated the last six years of his life to "the Cone," an edifice of mathematically exact construction that he has erected in the center of his family's estate in honor of his beloved sister. Not long after its completion, he takes his own life. As an unnamed friend pieces together—literally, from thousands of slips of papers and one troubling manuscript—the puzzle of Rotheimer's breakdown, what emerges is the story of a genius ceaselessly compelled to correct and refine his perceptions until the only logical conclusion is the negation of his own soul. Considered by many critics to be Thomas Bernhard's masterpiece, *Correction* is a cunningly crafted and unforgettable meditation on the tension between the desire for perfection and the knowledge that it is unattainable.

When the ringleader of a group of former college friends dies suddenly, the survivors gather at his Catskills estate to memorialize his life, pitting Iraq war protestor Ned against his wife, who believes that the deceased did not truly value Ned's friendship.

The author chronicles his early life in this account of growing up, an unwanted child, in Austria, from the terrors of the prewar years to the anarchy of the occupation

Roithamer, a character based on Wittgenstein, has committed suicide having been driven to madness by his own frightening powers of pure thought. We witness the gradual breakdown of a genius ceaselessly compelled to correct and refine his perceptions until the only logical conclusion is the negation of his own soul.

In the stories that make up *Oblivion*, David Foster Wallace joins the rawest, most naked humanity with the infinite involutions of self-consciousness -- a combination that is dazzlingly, uniquely his. These are worlds undreamt of by any other mind. Only David Foster Wallace could convey a father's desperate loneliness by way of his son's daydreaming through a teacher's homicidal breakdown (*The Soul Is Not a Smithy*). Or could explore the deepest and most hilarious aspects of creativity by delineating the office politics surrounding a magazine profile of an artist who produces miniature sculptures in an anatomically inconceivable way (*The Suffering Channel*). Or capture the ache of love's breakdown in the painfully polite apologies of a man who believes his wife is hallucinating the sound of his snoring (*Oblivion*). Each of these stories is a complete world, as fully imagined as most entire novels, at once preposterously surreal and painfully immediate.

Mauro Javier Cárdenas, the critically-acclaimed author of *The Revolutionaries Try Again*—"an original, insubordinate novel" (*New York Times*)—pens a profound story of literature about a man coming to terms with his dysfunctional Colombian family, as well as his own behavior, as an immigrant in America. Antonio wants to avoid thinking about his sister—even though he knows he won't be able to avoid thinking about his sister—because his sister is on the run after allegedly threatening to shoot her neighbors, and has been claiming that Antonio, Obama, the Pentagon, and their mother are all conspiring against her. Nevertheless, Antonio is going to try his best to be as avoidant as possible, because he worries that what's been happening to his sister might somehow infect his relatively contented, ordered American life, and destabilize the precarious arrangement with his ex-wife that's allowed him to stay close to his two daughters. In fact, he's busy doing everything except facing his problems head-on: transcribing recordings of his mother speaking about their troubled life in Colombia, transcribing recordings of his ex-wife speaking about her idyllic life in the Czech Republic; writing about former girlfriends whose words and deeds still recur in his mind; rereading stories by American writers that allow him to skirt the subject of his sister's state of mind without completely destroying his own. Written in long, unravelling sentences that accommodate all the detritus of thought—scenes real and imagined, headphones and heartache, Toblerones and Thomas Bernhard—*Aphasia* captures the immensity of the present moment as well as the pain of the past. It cements Mauro Javier Cárdenas's place as one of the most innovative and extraordinary novelists working today.

An odyssey through the mind and memory of a washed-up writer, from one of Europe's most provocative novelists mysteriously summoned to a houseboat on the Morava River, a few friends, associates, and collaborators of an old writer listen as he tells a story that will last until dawn: the tale of the once well-known writer's recent odyssey across Europe. As his story unfolds, it

visits places that represent stages of the narrator's and the continent's past, many now lost or irrecoverably changed through war, death, and the subtler erosions of time. His wanderings take him from the Balkans to Spain, Germany, and Austria, from a congress of experts on noise sickness to a clandestine international gathering of jew's-harp virtuosos. His story and its telling are haunted by a beautiful stranger, a woman who has a preternatural hold over the writer and appears sometimes as a demon, sometimes as the longed-for destination of his travels. Powerfully alive, honest, and at times deliciously satirical, *The Moravian Night* explores the mind and memory of an aging writer, tracking the anxieties, angers, fears, and pleasures of a life inseparable from the recent history of Central Europe. In crystalline prose, Peter Handke traces and interrogates his own thoughts and perceptions while endowing the world with a mythic dimension. As Jeffrey Eugenides writes, "Handke's sharp eye is always finding a strange beauty amid this colorless world." *The Moravian Night* is at once an elegy for the lost and forgotten and a novel of self-examination and uneasy discovery, from one of world literature's great voices.

Thomas Bernhard was one of the most original writers of the twentieth century. His formal innovation ranks with Beckett and Kafka, his outrageously cantankerous voice recalls Dostoevsky, but his gift for lacerating, lyrical, provocative prose is incomparably his own. One of Bernhard's most acclaimed novels, *The Loser* centers on a fictional relationship between piano virtuoso Glenn Gould and two of his fellow students who feel compelled to renounce their musical ambitions in the face of Gould's incomparable genius. One commits suicide, while the other-- the obsessive, witty, and self-mocking narrator-- has retreated into obscurity. Written as a monologue in one remarkable unbroken paragraph, *The Loser* is a brilliant meditation on success, failure, genius, and fame.

How We Learn Where We Live opens new avenues into thinking about one of the most provocative writers of the twentieth century, Thomas Bernhard. In one of the first English studies of his work, Fatima Naqvi focuses on the Austrian author's critique of education (*Bildung*) through the edifices in which it takes place. She demonstrates that both literature and architecture are implicated in the concept of *Bildung*. His writings insist that learning has always been a life-long process that is helped--or hindered--by the particular buildings in which *Bildung* occurs. Naqvi offers close readings of Bernhard's major prose works, from *Amras* (1964) to *Old Masters* (1985) and brings them into dialogue with major architectural debates of the times. She examines Bernhard's interrogation of the theoretical foundations underpinning the educational system and its actual sites.

It is 1967. In separate wings of a Viennese hospital, two men lie bedridden. The narrator, named Thomas Bernhard, is stricken with a lung ailment; his friend Paul, nephew of the celebrated philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, is suffering from one of his periodic bouts of madness. As their once-casual friendship quickens, these two eccentric men begin to discover in each other a possible antidote to their feelings of hopelessness and mortality—a spiritual symmetry forged by their shared passion for music, strange sense of humor, disgust for bourgeois Vienna, and great fear in the face of death. Part memoir, part fiction, Wittgenstein's Nephew is both a meditation on the artist's struggle to maintain a solid foothold in a world gone incomprehensibly askew, and a stunning—if not haunting—eulogy to a real-life friendship.

This critical survey of Thomas Bernhard's novels highlights a recurring theme of 'three' in Bernhard's work. Thomas J. Cousineau argues that each of Bernhard's novels, although firmly anchored in Austrian history, emerges from an archetypal story involving three figures: protagonist, scapegoat and author.

Visceral, raw, singular, and distinctive, *Frost* is the story of a friendship between a young man at the beginning of his medical career and a painter who is entering his final days. A writer of world stature, Thomas Bernhard combined a searing wit and an unwavering gaze into the human condition. *Frost* follows an unnamed young Austrian who accepts an unusual assignment. Rather than continue with his medical studies, he travels to a bleak mining town in the back of beyond, in order to clinically observe the aged painter, Strauch, who happens to be the brother of this young man's surgical mentor. The catch is this: Strauch must not know the young man's true occupation or the reason for his arrival. Posing as a promising law student with a love of Henry James, the young man befriends the mad artist and is caught up among an equally extraordinary cast of local characters, from his resentful landlady to the town's mining engineers. This debut novel by Thomas Bernhard, which came out in German in 1963 and is now being published in English for the first time, marks the beginning of what was one of the twentieth century's most powerful, provocative literary careers.

From the late Thomas Bernhard, arguably Austria's most influential novelist of the postwar period, and one of the greatest artists in all twentieth-century literature in the German language, his magnum opus. *Extinction*, Bernhard's last work of fiction, takes the form of the autobiographical testimony of Franz-Josef Murau, the intellectual black sheep of a powerful Austrian land-owning family. Murau lives in Rome in self-imposed exile from his family, surrounded by a coterie of artistic and intellectual friends. On returning from his sister's wedding to the "wine-cork manufacturer" on the family estate of Wolfsegg, having resolved never to go home again, Murau receives a telegram informing him of the death of his parents and brother in a car crash. Not only must he now go back, he must do so as the master of Wolfsegg. And he must decide its fate. Divided into two halves, *Extinction* explores Murau's rush of memories of Wolfsegg as he stands at his Roman window considering the fateful telegram, in counterpoint to his return to Wolfsegg and the preparations for the funeral itself. Written in the seamless style for which Bernhard became famous, *Extinction* is the ultimate proof of his extraordinary literary genius. It is his summing-up against Austria's treacherous past and -- in unprecedented fashion -- a revelation of his own incredibly complex personality, of his relationship with the world in which he lived, and the one he left behind. A literary event of the first magnitude.

There are as many truths about the sex trade as there are people who participate in it. In this new collection of creative nonfiction, people who've tangled with the sex industry write about the complications that arise in the mix of sex and money. From the accounts of love and loss, occupational hazards and tricks of the trade to personal stories of hope, resistance and survival, *Pros(e)* is a fiery collection of narratives by people who have walked the walk, and are now telling their tales. The contributions in the book were written by the participants of the Red Umbrella Project's first Becoming Writers Workshop, which took place in Fall 2012.

A gathering of brilliant and viciously funny recollections from one of the twentieth century's most famous literary enfants terribles. Written in 1980 but published here for the first time, these texts tell the story of the various farces that developed around the literary prizes Thomas Bernhard received in his lifetime. Whether it was the Bremen Literature Prize, the Grillparzer Prize, or the Austrian State Prize, his participation in the acceptance ceremony—always less than gracious, it must be said—resulted in scandal (only at the awarding of the prize from Austria's Federal

Chamber of Commerce did Bernhard feel at home: he received that one, he said, in recognition of the great example he set for shopkeeping apprentices). And the remuneration connected with the prizes presented him with opportunities for adventure—of the new-house and luxury-car variety. Here is a portrait of the writer as a prizewinner: laconic, sardonic, and shaking his head with biting amusement at the world and at himself. A revelatory work of dazzling comedy, the pinnacle of Bernhardian art.

Thomas Bernhard is widely considered to be one of the most important German playwrights in the post-war era. Highly acclaimed, he has written over twenty plays and novels and gained a reputation as one of Austria's most controversial authors. Bernhard wrote *Heldenplatz* in 1988 as a response to the fiftieth anniversary of the Anschluss (annexation) of Austria by Hitler's Germany. Highly controversial in Austria, the play concerns a Jewish professor who returns to Vienna after the Second World War and discovers that his fellow Austrians are as anti-semitic as ever. 'Heldenplatz' is the square in Vienna where the Austrian-born Hitler made his first speech after the Anschluss. In *Heldenplatz*, Bernhard's final play, he explores the shared isolation of people who have lost their bearings, along with most of their illusions.

From the late Thomas Bernhard, arguably Austria's most influential novelist of the postwar period, and one of the greatest artists in all twentieth-century literature in the German language, his magnum opus. *Extinction*, Bernhard's last work of fiction, takes the form of the autobiographical testimony of Franz-Josef Murau, the intellectual black sheep of a powerful Austrian land-owning family. Murau lives in Rome in self-imposed exile from his family, surrounded by a coterie of artistic and intellectual friends. On returning from his sister's wedding to the "wine-cork manufacturer" on the family estate of Wolfsegg, having resolved never to go home again, Murau receives a telegram informing him of the death of his parents and brother in a car crash. Not only must he now go back, he must do so as the master of Wolfsegg. And he must decide its fate. Divided into two halves, *Extinction* explores Murau's rush of memories of Wolfsegg as he stands at his Roman window considering the fateful telegram, in counterpoint to his return to Wolfsegg and the preparations for the funeral itself. Written in the seamless style for which Bernhard became famous, *Extinction* is the ultimate proof of his extraordinary literary genius. It is his summing-up against Austria's treacherous past and -- in unprecedented fashion -- a revelation of his own incredibly complex personality, of his relationship with the world in which he lived, and the one he left behind. A literary event of the first magnitude. From the Hardcover edition.

Told as a series of parable-like anecdotes, a misanthropic satire by the twentieth-century Austrian playwright presents a modern world of politicians, professionals, tourists, and civil servants reeling from corruption, madness, and alienation. UP.

With pitch-perfect, pitch-black humor, this saga refracts through one family's struggles a whole country's nightmare. The tyrant of the book is the actual pro-Nazi mystic Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, known as the Warlock, who came to power in El Salvador in 1932. An attempted coup in April of 1944 failed, but a general strike in May finally forced him out of office. The book takes place during that tumultuous month between the coup and the strike. With her husband a political prisoner and her son fleeing for his life, wealthy Haydée Aragon takes matters into her own hands. Events ricochet from one near-disaster to the next.--Publisher's description.

The Swiss writer Robert Walser is one of the quiet geniuses of twentieth-century literature. Largely self-taught and altogether indifferent to worldly success, Walser wrote a range of short stories, essays, as well as four novels, of which *Jakob von Gunten* is widely recognized as the finest. The book is a young man's inquisitive and irreverent account of life in what turns out to be the most uncanny of schools. It is the work of an outsider artist, a writer of uncompromising originality and disconcerting humor, whose beautiful sentences have the simplicity and strangeness of a painting by Henri Rousseau.

Fiction. Translated by Douglas Robertson. THE CHEAP-EATERS have been eating at the Vienna Public Kitchen for years, and true to their name, always the cheapest meals. They become the focus of Koller's scientific attention when he deviates one day from his usual path through the park, leading him to come upon the cheap-eaters and to realize that they must be the focal piece of his years-long, unwritten study of physiognomy. The narrator, a former school friend of Koller's, tells of his relationship with Koller in a single unbroken paragraph that is both dizzying and absorbing. In *Koller*, the narrator observes a "gradually ever-growing and utterly exclusive interest in thought... We can get close to such a person, but if we come into contact with him we will be repelled." Written in Bernhard's hyperbolic, darkly comic style, *THE CHEAP-EATERS* is a study of the limits of language and thought.

This translation of Thomas Bernhard's *Der Weltverbesserer* makes a contemporary masterpiece available to English language readers for the first time. While echoing the dramatic works of Samuel Becket, Heiner Müller and Peter Handke, *The World-Fixer* is quintessentially Bernhardian and one of his most stage-worthy plays. Presenting a theme he would explore in the play *Ritter Dene Voss* and the novels *Wittgenstein's Nephew* and *The Loser*, *The World-Fixer* revolves around a self-centred, self-styled genius loosely patterned on Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. The protagonist is the author of an obscure philosophical tract ostensibly designed to improve the condition of the world, if the world could only understand it. Over the course of a day, he looks forward to receiving an honorary degree, while reflecting on his life and engaging in dysfunctional banter. Combining absurdist comedy with an astute satire of academic pomposity, *The World-Fixer* ultimately gives a moving portrait of simple human frailty.

In this exuberantly satirical novel, the tutor Atzbacher has been summoned by his friend Reger to meet him in a Viennese museum. While Reger gazes at a Tintoretto portrait, Atzbacher—who fears Reger's plans to kill himself—gives us a portrait of the musicologist: his wisdom, his devotion to his wife, and his love-hate relationship with art. With characteristically acerbic wit, Bernhard exposes the pretensions and aspirations of humanity in a novel at once pessimistic and strangely exhilarating. "Bernhard's . . . most enjoyable novel."—Robert Craft, *New York Review of Books*. "Bernhard is one of the masters of contemporary European fiction."—George Steiner

The playwright and novelist Thomas Bernhard was one of the most widely translated and admired writers of his generation, winner of the three most coveted literary prizes in Germany. *Gargoyles*, one of his earliest novels, is a singular, surreal study of the nature of humanity. One morning a doctor and his son set out on daily rounds through the grim mountainous Austrian countryside. They observe the colorful characters they encounter—from an innkeeper whose wife has been murdered to a crippled musical prodigy kept in a cage—coping with physical misery, madness, and the brutality of the austere landscape. The parade of human grotesques culminates in a hundred-page monologue by an eccentric, paranoid prince, a relentlessly flowing

cascade of words that is classic Bernhard.

An Edinburgh International Festival production. The lobby of a grand hotel, New Year's Eve. A snow storm rages. Minetti, a long-forgotten actor, arrives in great spirits to discuss his comeback as King Lear with a theatre director. While he waits patiently in the hotel lobby, Minetti's obsessive personality reveals itself in a series of strange encounters with other guests. He rails against outrageous fortune and unfulfilled ambitions, often colliding with crowds of young hotel guests who frequently burst in to celebrate New Year's Eve. As with King Lear, the storm which rages outside reflects his turbulent emotions until he finally finds peace and resolution.

For five years, Konrad has imprisoned himself and his crippled wife in an abandoned lime works where he's conducted odd auditory experiments and prepared to write his masterwork, The Sense of Hearing. As the story begins, he's just blown the head off his wife with the Mannlicher carbine she kept strapped to her wheelchair. The murder and the bizarre life that led to it are the subject of a mass of hearsay related by an unnamed life-insurance salesman in a narrative as mazy, byzantine, and mysterious as the lime works—Konrad's sanctuary and tomb.

1 copy located in CIRCULATION.

Fiercely observed, often hilarious, and "reminiscent of Ibsen and Strindberg" (The New York Times Book Review), this exquisitely controversial novel was initially banned in its author's homeland. A searing portrayal of Vienna's bourgeoisie, it begins with the arrival of an unnamed writer at an 'artistic dinner' hosted by a composer and his society wife—a couple he once admired and has come to loathe. The guest of honor, a distinguished actor from the Burgtheater, is late. As the other guests wait impatiently, they are seen through the critical eye of the writer, who narrates a silent but frenzied tirade against these former friends, most of whom have been brought together by Joana, a woman they buried earlier that day. Reflections on Joana's life and suicide are mixed with these denunciations until the famous actor arrives, bringing an explosive end to the evening that even the writer could not have seen coming.

Although he is best known in the United States as a novelist, Austrian writer Thomas Bernhard has been hailed in Europe as one of the most significant and controversial of contemporary playwrights. George Steiner has predicted that the current era in German-language literature will be recognized as the "Bernhard period"; John Updike compares Bernhard with Kafka, Grass, Handke, and Weiss. His dark, absurdist plays can be likened to those of Beckett and Pinter, but their cultural and political concerns are distinctly Bernhard's. While Austria's recent political history lends particular credibility to Bernhard's satire, his criticisms are directed at the modern world generally; his plays grapple with questions of totalitarianism and the subjection of the individual and with notions of reality and appearance.

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