

Both authors of well-regarded fiction, Ulrike Almut Sandig and Judith Zander are also accomplished poets. Here, NBG prints exclusive new translations.

'Ulrike Almut Sandig and Judith Zander, both under 35, grew up in rural East Germany. While they never slip into misguided nostalgia, many of their poems contain echos of a time and place in the past. Sandig frequently draws the reader into a specific scene or moment, providing a clearly contoured portrait, occasionally closing with a twist. Zander has a fondness for strict forms and an ear for metre, stringing together abstract images to assemble a coherent snapshot. Their work rewards multiple readings by revealing new layers of surprising power.'
– Bradley Schmidt, translator

Three poems by Ulrike Almut Sandig

AN APPLE, TWO CUPS

everything is done, everything
is in its place.
all the boxes unpacked
CDs and books
ordered. Everything is here.
we sit opposite each other
an apple, two cups
water that tastes like
wine to us. beams of light
stand around us
dust twists slowly
we don't see it.

two open windows, wind
waves between us.

ALONG THE MIDDLE OF EACH OF OUR OWN BODIES

we kiss each other often on our wet faces.
we lock up tightly the tear that travels horizontally
along the middle of each of our own bodies.
we sew ourselves to each other. we sew ourselves
together. we make ourselves, you, a silent creature.

IN SUMMER THE ELDERLY SIT

their feet drawn close and hold their suitcases tight.
they contain: savings in plastic wrap, mother's
gold jewellery, three photos, two letters, the passport.
only the elderly sit in the dark on tables when wind
winds up, and count the seconds between thunder
and lightning
and the elderly sit and don't say a word

Three Poems by Judith Zander

VANISHING POINT

from the burning
scissor-steps racing
peels out tetrapod fly
to the edges of breath
and facing
concrete
the curbs sway against
our eyes a
red repoussé
between your lighter-fingers
something grows warm like fox fur
fast as you can baby
under my thin
tongue rattles the other
half of the slogan
casually your neck dries
up the rain-light

OR DAWN

my hand is a dead fish in the morning
it drifts on your chest
sideways the night made
a heron take wing

my eyes two swinging canoes in
the short waves of daylight a dead
fish lies on your chest like an alp
like a fish out of water you gasp twitch
back from the brothers the one
is called sleep they
paddle with strokes in unison they
tie sparkling strings for everyone
drop for drop into the river

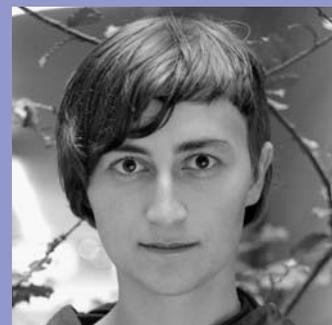
my hand is a dead fish
in the morning silver the scales in the rushes
uncaught it swashes on your chest
on the bank the rushes bide their time

IT DOESN'T COME WHEN YOU CALL

we imagined the weather
would hold up the rain
lets itself daily
with its sedan carried
the earth to earth
in its gracious entirety
but then there were
cords that like

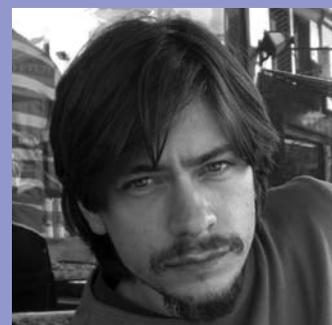
the jaw's harp touched the core they
proclaimed something and what
played at night in the window
crack we added
to our dreams
heavenly children

it cools us when we sweat



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Ulrike Almut Sandig was born in 1979 in East Germany and now lives in Leipzig, having studied at the renowned Leipzig Institute for German Literature. She has published several volumes of poetry and one prose work, *Flamingos* (reviewed in NBG Spring 2010). Sandig has received many awards for her poetry, including the prestigious Leonce and Lena Prize.



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Bradley Schmidt was born in South Dakota and grew up in rural Kansas. He studied literature, philosophy and theology as well as translation in the US and Germany. He now works as a freelance translator and as a lecturer at the University of Leipzig.



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Judith Zander was shortlisted for the 2010 German Book Prize for her debut novel *Dinge, die wir heute sagten* ('Things we said today'). She was born in East Germany in 1980 and now lives in Berlin, where she writes and translates. She has received numerous prizes for her poetry.

All translations by Bradley Schmidt.
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