

COMING IN SPRING 2020:

ELIJAS'S SONG

BY AMANDA LASKER-BERLIN

Foto © Michael Matthey



Elijas Lied

Novel. German.

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In *Elija's Song*, Amanda Lasker-Berlin presents us with a brilliant portrait of three very different sisters, boldly addressing highly topical issues in irresistible, gripping prose.

Elija is the oldest of the sisters. Born with Down syndrome, she takes in the beauty of the world through her heavy-lidded eyes. She adores the stage. When she plays the role of Hagar who is sent to the desert, alone and with child, Elija is a mother. In real life, she will never be.

Noa works in a canteen. Every lunchtime, she hopes to spot Akim, her lover who works on the top floor of the glass tower overlooking the river Elbe. They talk about many things, her exmatriculation, her travels to East Asia, but not about where she goes every day when her shift in the canteen is over.

Loth, the youngest, is striking in her statue-like beauty. And she is angry. At demonstrations they call her a Nazi. She in turn suspects the left of being twisted fascists. She has moved to Halle, into a flat share with her like-minded friends, and she is ready to fight.

Elija, Noa and Loth used to be close before Loth changed sides. Maybe a trip to the moor, retracing their childhood footsteps can help bridge the abyss between them.

The hike is Loth's idea: so they can be sisters once again – cross the moor and climb the mountain and sing the song their father wrote for them. But the moor has changed as much as the sisters have. Elija, Noa and Loth spend the day alone together, each of them absorbed by her own thoughts and memories. Memories even the moorland can't swallow. And nothing to hold on to.

Amanda Lasker-Berlin masters the art of reduction, of leaving traces, of generating ever increasing vibrations up to a final eruption that will leave readers breathless. Her smooth, condensed language, her empathy and confidence in the power of her characters as well as her skilled portrayal of social controversies show Lasker-Berlin as an outstandingly talented debut author.

Amanda Lasker-Berlin, born in 1994 in Essen, staged her first play at the age of 18. Following her studies of the liberal arts at the Bauhaus University in Weimar she is currently studying directing in Ludwigsburg. For her drama *Yellow Desert / Pink Room* she was awarded the „ThOP-Nachwuchsdramatikerpreis“, her play *Amazonen verrecken* won the 3rd “Osnabrücker Dramatikerpreis“ in 2019. For her prose she was awarded the jury prize of the Münchner Kurzgeschichten Wettbewerb and she was a finalist of the Hattinger Förderpreis für junge Literatur. *Elija's Song* is her first novel and nominated for the LitCologne Debut Prize 2020.

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