

# What is Poetry? IV

## BACKGROUND

In 2011 poets of all nations, of different institutions, universities and art centres started a new and exiting series of festivals and work shops. 'What's Poetry' is an experimental approach aiming to enrich the global cultural landscape by the means of poetical and intellectual exchange and debate in different areas of the world.

The partners of the festivals are high profile institutions (see attachment) to support a long-term project that has explored and negotiated cultural ideas and artistic production from its very beginning. This project has initiated a new network, which might offer a decisively new perception of our status quo and the future.

## What is Poetry? is an initiative by:

Dudy Anggawi (Indonesia, Director of "Forum Penyair Internasional Indonesia")

Michael Augustin (Director of "Poetry on the Road", Radio Bremen)

Silke Behl (Chairwoman "Literaturhaus Bremen", Radio Bremen)

Indra Wussow (Director/Curator "Sylt Foundation" (Germany/South Africa)

## Previous festivals:

2012: *What is Poetry Festival I* in Indonesia. 45 poets from 11 countries

2013: *What is Poetry Festival II* in South Africa/Zimbabwe. 15 poets from 8 countries, visual artists and musicians

2015: *Whats's Poetry Festival III / Tabanan International Poetry Festival* in Indonesia/Bali. 10 poets of 7 countries; Indonesian musicians, composers and dancers

## Concept of the What is Poetry festival:

Readings and performances of poets from different countries and backgrounds constitute the basis of all the festivals. Through these works we aim to scrutinize the ideas of language and its importance for individual and national identities in the past, the present and in the future. In workshops and discussions we have been exploring the different approaches in different countries and entities. During panel discussions with academics, work shops with students and translators we have aimed to develop and refine the project, to formulate new questions and to add new partners.

This project aims at sustainability: A huge number of (published) translations, follow-up-workshops, cross-cultural dialogs, residencies and invitations extended the network quickly and opened it for trend-setting discussions.

Sustainability is also guaranteed due to the steady inner circle of the project. Organizers and poets like Ulrike Draesner, Afrizal Malna and Vonani Bila attended the project from the very beginning and are till now involved in developing it further and constantly expanding the network.

## PROJECT 2017

Ubud (Bali), 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017

### What is Poetry Festival IV –

The idea of language, its changing expressions and perceptions in a hybrid world.

Our latest edition of “What is Poetry” aims to look at the topic from new and very different angles. The language of the arts – their different concepts of language, their different forms of language and expressions will be critically scrutinized. Are there common denominators and where are points of contacts? And what does it mean for common artistic collaborations. Especially for international and intercultural art projects.

Experiences/discourses convinced the curators and the participations that language, poetry and literature should be scrutinized interdisciplinary and thus artists from other fields are invited to share their experiences and ideas.

The interdisciplinary approach will be at the core of the Bali festival and discourses and workshops among poets, visual artists, dancers, musicians, composers and curators about their ideas and use of language will be an integral part of the experience.

There will be a show of Jaco van Schalkwyk’s painting series “Arcadia” that is a result of his previous residency in Bali in 2015.

### PARTICIPANTS of the Festival in Ubud:

**Dudy Anggawi** (curator/actor/Indonesia)

**Silke Behl** (curator/writer, Germany)

**Ulrike Draesner** (poet/Germany)

**Rosa Dorothea Herliany** (poet/Indonesia)

**Di Lu Galay** (poet/Myanmar)

**Samar Gantang** (poet/Indonesia)

**Heiko Kalmbach** (filmmaker/Germany)

**Nengah Hari Mahardika** (musician/Composer/Indonesia)

**Afrizal Malna** (poet/Indonesia)

**Jill Richards** (pianist/composer/ South Africa)

**Jaco van Schalkwyk** (visual artist/South Africa)

**Enrique Winter** (poet/Chile)

**Indra Wussow** (curator/writer/Germany)

## BIOGRAPHIES



**Dudy Anggawi** (Indonesia/ Germany)

Actor, translator and organisator. He studied journalism in Jakarta and became member of the famous Bengkel Teater Rendra in 1984. Since then he was working as an actor as well as group manager locally and abroad, when the theatre company staged productions in the United States, Japan and South Korea. In 2002 he was one of the organizers of 'Poetry International' in Indonesia. In 2011 he founded the "Forum Internasional Indonesia", an organization that has connected poets, cultural institutions and supporters of literature worldwide. In 2012 the forum initiated the first edition of 'What's Poetry' in Indonesia. 2013 he curated the Indonesian participants for the second edition in South Africa/ Zimbabwe. 2015 Dudy Anggawi curated and co-organized the third edition in Tabanan/Bali. Dudy Anggawi translated and published a volume of poems by Rainer Maria Rilke at Henk Publika, Indonesia.



**Silke Behl** (Germany)

Journalist, broadcaster at Radio Bremen, curator and writer; studied Literature and Philosophy; has published several books, among them three on Indonesia, where she taught literature at Universitas Indonesia for five years; co-founder of the international 'Poetry on the Road' festival in Bremen and member of the board of the international organization 'Poets of All Nations'. For the last ten years she has been chairwoman of the board at the 'Bremen Literature House' and was one of the initiators of the 'What's poetry'- project. 2002/ 2012 and 2014 she co-curated the European participants for the festivals in Indonesia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Silke Behl has her own literature-program at Radio Bremen. She produces features about the literature-scenes worldwide and invites regularly writers and poets for a one-hour-talk-program.



**Ulrike Draesner** (Germany)

Ulrike Draesner read Law, English and German literature as well as Philosophy in Munich, Salamanca, and Oxford. She worked as a lecturer Institute for German Philology from 1989 to 1993. In 1992, she received her doctorate for a dissertation on the Middle High German romance Parzival.

In 1993, Ulrike Draesner quit her academic career in order to work as a full-time author. She has lived in Berlin since 1994, writing both poetry and prose. Her novel *Vorliebe* (2010) is a romance novel. In 2014, her groundbreaking novel *Sieben Sprünge vom Rand der Welt* was published and a celebrated success. Draesner frequently collaborates in cross-media projects with other artists and merges literature with sculpting, performing arts, and music. She became a member of the PEN-Zentrum Deutschland in 1999. In 2010, she was elected to a Fellowship at the North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences, Humanities and the Arts. She is a regular guest at international literary festivals. Her work has been translated into numerous languages. Since the beginning of the academic year 2015/16 Ulrike Draesner is a Visiting Fellow at New College, Oxford, working with Karen Leeder, leader of the Mediating Modernity project on topics of bilingualism, poetry translation and negotiating identity as a Writer in residence at the Faculty for Medieval and Modern Languages at the University of Oxford. A symposium on her and her work was held in April 2016.

2012 Ulrike Draesner was part of the first International Festival 'What is poetry' in Indonesia, when writers and artists from all over the world traveled Java together with their Indonesian colleagues. She translated Afrizal Malnas poetry into German.



### **Di Lu Galay** (Myanmar)

Di Lu Galay (born 1986) is one of the most important poets of the young generation in Myanmar. In 2013, 2014 and 2015 he organized the Poetry Festival "Midnight Poetry Festival", which happened as an internet facebook event and was a remarkable event in the Myanmar poetry scene and an important milestone for the young generation of Myanmar poets. The recordings of the poems from the 2013 "Midnight Poetry Festival" were published as a book in 2014.

With four other poets he published the poetry collection "Ngarr" and in 2015 he and three other colleagues published the poetry collection collection "Zi Wa Foute Pyan Mhu" (Abnormal Metabolism Transformation).

His poems are informed by the very fluctuating concept of the current social conditions of Myanmar and convey the tremendous changes abstractly and intellectually and introduce us into the ambiguity of that very change, its hidden meanings and messages and what is psychologically and socially involved. His use of metaphors and imaginary hints at the changing parameters of a society in flux and yet transcend it to a broader and outlasting collective and individual experience.

Di Lu Galay is celebrated by literary critics for his work and his profound use of neo-surrealistic reflections, for questioning the origins of human values. He is a literary translator of note and has translated several poets from English into Burmese. Di Lu Galay is the editor of Hnin Si Phyu literature journal. His poems and translations have appeared in several local magazines and poetry collections. Besides Di Lu Galay works as a lawyer.



### **I Gusti Putu Bawa Samar Gantang** (Indonesia)

(Tabanan, Bali, 1949) is known as Samar Gantang in Indonesia's literary scene. He is famous as a mantra-chanting (or "Modre" in Balinese language) poet of Bali and has done a lot of poetry performance-reading all over Bali, Java, Malaysia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. His mantra-poems transform Balinese philosophy into theme, sound and movement. Samar Gantang has published numerous books of poetry and short stories in both Balinese and Indonesian and has been awarded several prestigious national literary awards. To honour his achievement, the local Bali's state television station TVRI creates special program for him called 'Gatra Bal'i and 'Surya Sewana' in which he reads his poems "five minutes every day". Samar Gantang was part of the 'What's poetry?'-project 2012 in Java and 2013 in South Africa and Zimbabwe.



### **Dorothea Rosa Herliany** (Indonesia)

Dorothea Rosa Herliany, born 1963 in Central Java. As a Catholic, she belongs to the Christian minority. In 2009, a first small selection of her poems was published in a German translation entitled "Schenk mir alles, was die Männer nicht besitzen". In the same year, Herliany received a fellowship residency at the Heinrich Böll Foundation. Around this time, she was already a frequently seen and welcome guest on the stages of international literature festivals.

With Herliany one hears not only one of the few female voices of present-day Indonesian poetry. At the same time, she currently ranks as the most important and unusual writer of her generation – the so-called "Second Generation" of Indonesian writers. This generation grew up in postcolonial Indonesia – the third largest democracy in the world had gained its independence from the Netherlands in 1945. That said, Herliany's generation experienced neither colonial suppression of the Netherlanders nor the militant furor of the founding generation. For her, being Indonesian went without saying, as did expressing oneself in the Indonesian language. Herliany, who had already begun writing at sixteen, drew much attention to herself on the stage of Indonesian literature with the publication of her 1987 debut volume of poetry "Nyanyian Gaduh" (Boisterous Songs).

Her themes: things never spoken about in the society of her birth: sexuality, the body of the woman, violence against women, society-related and social inequality, and the political abuse of power. Even in her politically-motivated

poems she proceeds on cat's paws. Almost never does she convey the character of a political pamphlet – instead, one must know the historical context of the respective situations she refers to between the lines

Herliany works were translated by Ulrike Draesner, Berthold Damshausser and Brigitte Oleschinski. 2013 she was guest of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin-Program. 2015 she represented her country at the Frankfurt Bookfair.



**Heiko Kalmbach** (Germany)

Filmmaker, projection designer, stage director

Heiko Kalmbach's work as stage director and projection designer has been presented at Volksbühne Berlin, La MaMa E.T.C. NY, Theaterhaus Jena, Fusion Festival, Chamäleon Theater Berlin, Aarshi Theater Group Kolkata, Schlachthaus Theater Bern, Autorentheatertage at Thalia Theater Hamburg, Crash!Boom!Bau! Festival, Dramafest Mexico City, the Kitchen NY, Schleswig Holsteinisches Landestheater, Tanztage Bremen, Roxy Basel, Stadttheater Bern, Saarländisches Staatstheater Saarbrücken, on Hapag Lloyd's MS Europa2 and on worldwide tour with the y2d/Chamäleon production LEO which was awarded the Carol Tambor Best of Edinburgh Award, Three Weeks Editors Award, Scotsman Fringe First Award, Adelaide Critics Circle Award, Adelaide Fringe Award and the John Chattaway Innovation Award.

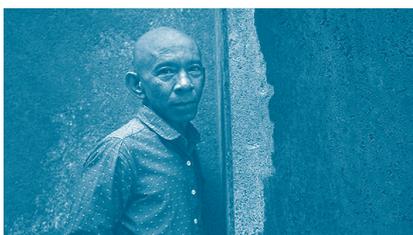
Heiko Kalmbach has been leading workshops and seminars in his fields of practice since the late 1990s. He pursued Drama, Film and Cultural Studies at Universities in Berlin and Bremen before earning a BfA in Film (Honours) at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in 1998. He has been teaching spatial media design at Technical University's MA Program "Bühnenbild\_Szenischer Raum" in Berlin since 2011 and has been a studio tutor and lecturer for film and dramaturgy at the Architectural Association's Interprofessional Studio in London since 2009.

Individual grants and residencies include an Artist's Fellowship for Film from the New York Foundation for the Arts, a Martin Scorsese Award, Russell Hexter Filmmaker's Award, Nestor Almendros Award, Artist Residencies at Camargo Foundation in France, MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire, USA, kunst:raum Sylt-Quelle in Germany, Human Resources Gallery LA, USA, and at Sitterwerk St Gallen in Switzerland.



**I Gusti Nengah Hari Mahardika, S.Sn.** (Indonesia)

(Tabanan, Indonesia, 1983) is composer and musician; one of the most interesting experts in traditional balinese gamelan music, open for experiments and advancement. He graduated from Karawitan Art Department, ISI Denpasar, and has been active in creating new compositions since 2005. He was awarded several times and is with his compositions a frequent participant in art exhibitions all over Indonesia. In 2007 he started an exchange program with the National Dance Institute New York. Other international cooperations brought him to Chile, Peru etc. 2008 he took part the famous 'Javajazz Festival Jakarta', 2010 and 2011 in the 'Jazz Market' Nusa Dua, Bali., where he performed together with Ito Kurdi. Beside all that I Gusti Nengah is still active in the traditional Balinese gamelan scene and performs regular in ritual contexts.



**Afrizal Malna** (Indonesia)

Within the differentiating canon of contemporary Indonesia's literary scene, the writer Afrizal Malna, born 1957 in Jakarta and still residing there, embodies a highly unique voice. His poems – "physical encounters with urban space", as the researcher and translator Andy Fuller, who teaches in Jakarta, describes them – establish a clear contrast not only with the pure intellectualism of, say, a Goenawan Mohamed, but also with the gentle romanticism Sapardi Djoko Damono represents. By comparison, Malna has doubts in language, and he elevates working on and with language to his strongest weapon in order to repeatedly put Indonesia's long journey into modernism, accompanied by social and political rejections, to the test.

“Language is a monster that simultaneously creates and cancels communication”, writes Malna, who studied philosophy, demonstrating his puzzling sense of humour in the introduction of his volume of poetry, “Second Hand Language Store A and B” (2012): Why – as expressed here – do people invent language to speak with people? Language is certainly always a problem – and a problem seems to be human speech. For this reason, in all his poems, he reflects, no, explores the complicated relationship between language, bodies, and space. “Complicated” applies since language – which one allegedly owns yet must repeatedly “make” – not least of all determines the poetic self’s location in space. Malna’s poems were translated into English, Dutch and German. His German translator is Ulrike Draesner. 2014 Malna was guest of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin-Program. 2015 he represented his country at the Frankfurt Bookfair.



### **Jill Richards** (South Africa)

Jill Richards is a South African pianist specialising in new music. Versatile and dynamic, her interests range from Bach to free improvisation.

Her career includes collaborations with numerous composers from around the world. She has a longstanding working relationship with Kevin Volans who has written many solo works as well as piano duos for her. These she has performed with the composer as partner. Jill has worked with Jörg Schäffer, François Sarhan, Rudiger Meyer, Clare Loveday, and many others. She has also toured with live music performances to William Kentridge’s films.

Jill has performed and been broadcast in the UK, Europe, North America and Australasia. Among these were the BBC broadcasts of the premières of solo and duo works of Kevin Volans. She has released five CD’s, including the Grammy-nominated “Cicada” of Volans, as well as the complete piano music of Michael Blake.

Jill has performed with renowned Spanish composer and sound artist Francisco Lopez. She also collaborates with sound artist João Orecchia, visual artist Marcus Neustetter, composer-drummer Christophe Fellay, video artists Dorothee Kreuzfeld and Jurgen Meekel, and Joke Lanz of Sudden Infant. Jill and Waldo Alexander recorded works by Kevin Volans for piano, violin and viola for the Ergodos label; the CD includes Volans’ 9th piano etude, written for her.



### **Jaco van Schalkwyk** (South Africa)

Jaco van Schalkwyk was born in 1981 in Benoni, South Africa. He grew up in the faith home, Jatniël: the headquarters of the Latter Rain Mission International. It is this background which informs his view of and interpretation of society and the landscape, which is the foundation of his body of work.

He was educated at Brandwag Hoërskool and holds a BA degree in historical studies at UNISA.

His frequent travels abroad take him to some of the world’s great art museums and international exhibitions. This has given him a world-view on historical and contemporary art.

In 2008 he attended an artist’s residency, hosted by the New York Art Students’ League in the USA.

He has also participated in numerous exhibitions both here and abroad and is represented in several collections: The Reserve Bank of South Africa, Barclays bank, RMB, the University of Pretoria, the University of Johannesburg and the Ellerman Collection.

The Barnard Gallery in Cape Town held three successful exhibitions for the artist in recent years; “Just a matter of Time” in 2012, “I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things” in 2013 and “Eden” in 2015. In 2013 he was also awarded the Sylt: Kunst Raum artist residency at the Barclays L’Atelier Competition.

He attended the Sylt Artist Residency in 2014, where he found inspiration for his solo exhibition “Eden” that was also shown at The ABSA Gallery in June 2015. This exhibition formed part of his Barclays L’Atelier merit award. In September 2015 he was also selected by the University of Johannesburg and sponsored by Zendai, to attend the 6<sup>th</sup> International Beijing Biennale in China where his work formed part of the South African Group exhibition “20 – Art in the time of Democracy”.



### **Enrique Winter** (Chile)

Enrique Winter (Santiago, Chile, 1982) is author of *Atar las naves* (winner of the Víctor Jara Arts Festival), *Rascacielos* (awarded the National Book Council fellowship, available in English as *Skyscrapers*), *Guía de despacho* (winner of the National Young Poet Competition), *Lengua de señas* (winner of the Pablo de Rokha Poetry Prize, available in English as *Sign Tongue*, version that won as well the Goodmorning Menagerie Chapbook-in-Translation prize) and co-author of the LP *Agua en polvo* (awarded the Fund for the Promotion of Chilean Music fellowship), collected in several anthologies and languages including German's *Oben das Meer unten der Himmel* (Luxbooks, 2016). He is also author of the novel *Las bolsas de basura* and translator of books by Charles Bernstein and Philip Larkin. Winter holds an MFA in Creative Writing at NYU and directs the Creative Writing diploma at PUCV. He used to be an editor and an attorney.

### **Indra Wussow** (Germany/South Africa)

Indra Wussow is a literary scholar born in Herford/Germany.



She studied Comparative Literature and Translation in Erlangen/Germany, Berkeley/USA and Florence/Italy. She is currently living in Johannesburg and is working as a curator, writer, literary translator and freelance journalist. 2002 Indra founded the Sylt Foundation, a cultural foundation which offers residency programmes on the island of Sylt in Germany and in Johannesburg/South Africa. Indra is the artistic director and curator of the foundation.

Indra Wussow is also the editor of *AfrikAWunderhorn*, a series of African literature, that is published in the small but prestigious German publishing house „Das Wunderhorn“ and runs a series of monthly literary talks on contemporary African writing at the Goethe Institute in Johannesburg called „Literary Crossroads“ As curator Indra is working with various international institutions and focuses on international interdisciplinary projects.

What is  
**Poetry? IV**



Literaturhaus Bremen 

**FORUM PENYAIR**  
INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

**S > LTF FOUNDATION**  
Connecting artists around the world.