

Fuori per sempre [Doris Femminis]

Autor(en): **Gunten, Ruth von**

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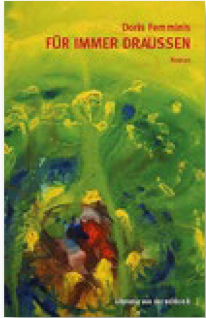
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Outside forever



DORIS FEMMINIS:
 "Fuori per sempre"
 Marcos y Marcos,
 Milan 2019, 352 pages,
 EUR 18 / CHF 24
 German translation:
 "Für immer draussen"
 Edition 8, Zurich 2022
 272 pages, CHF 25

Giulia is a young woman from Ticino who grew up in a remote mountain village in the 1990s. The only one of her siblings to have gone to grammar school, she begins a university course far away from home. During a family visit shortly before her final exams, Giulia tries to take her own life. She is admitted to a psychiatric clinic, where she initially refuses all assistance and attempts to escape several times. It is thanks to considerable patience and dedication that the amenable house psychiatrist and her team of nurses manage to win Giulia's trust. The patient opens up and eventually starts talking about her problems and family history.

The three chapters in this book bear the names "Giulia", "Annalisa" and "Sanders". Annalisa is Giulia's deceased sister – or perhaps her alter ego who prefers to spend time in the

woods well away from other people. Sanders is the bolshie fellow patient who talks Giulia into escaping – or the embodiment of someone whom Giulia would like to become.

The novel deals with a time when there was still great poverty in Ticino's valleys and family roles were very traditional. But it also captures an era of change – symbolised in this case by Giulia, who first needs to work out her own way in life.

The various settings are vividly portrayed. But what characterises this novel the most is the ambivalence between the outside and the inside, or normality and insanity, as well as the contrast between urban life and nature. The middle chapter "Annalisa" is particularly well executed on account of its detailed prose.

Author Doris Femminis skilfully intertwines different narrative rhythms. She builds tension but leaves room for interpretation at the same time. This is a gripping story of notable depth.

"Für immer draussen" (Outside forever) is Doris Femminis' second book. Femmini received the Swiss Literature Award from the Federal Office of Culture in 2020.

The author was born in Ticino's Maggia Valley in 1972. She worked in a psychiatric clinic after training to become a nurse. Outside work, she and a friend used to keep a herd of goats. After studying and living in Geneva for a number of years, she now lives with her family in the Joux Valley in the canton of Vaud.

RUTH VON GUNTEN

Dino Brandão and the voice of angels



DINO BRANDÃO:
 "Bouncy Castle"
 2021, Two Gentlemen

Those who have had the good fortune to hear Dino Brandão live will not forget it. Here is an artist gifted with an extraordinary voice, immersed in a peculiar world. You can see for yourself by watching the video for "Bouncy Castle", a hit from the Swiss singer's first album. The five songs from this mini-CD make up a psychedelic and melancholy collage. "My psyche is a bouncy castle, I'll let you jump in," sings Brandão, alternating between head voice and low tones. The 29-year-old Zurich artist has notably worked with one of the most prominent Swiss singers of the day, Sophie Hunger. Brought up in Brugg, he is the offspring of an Argovian and an Angolan. His father was a child soldier, and it

would seem that his son is still experiencing the shockwave of his father's bloody past. His lyrics express suffering. Dino Brandão's music perhaps serves to deliver him from a threatening shadow, a particular kind of schizophrenia with which he has been diagnosed. When he is composing, the artist hides away in his studio, amongst drums piled up to the ceiling. He works alone, compiling his recordings and his musical collages on his computer.

This self-taught musician's musical education is based on rap, but also mixed music, like that of Angolan artist Bonga, whose powerful and torn voice somewhat resembles his own. This would be a good time to listen again to the heartbreaking hit "Mona Ki Ngi Xica." Dino Brandão speaks good English, but also likes to sing in dialect. The album "Ich liebe Dich", released at the end of 2020, serves as proof. This creation is the result of his work with Zurich singer Faber, and Sophie Hunger, who were recording in the midst of the lockdown. Although a proficient skateboarder, Brandão moves as if he were possessed by a spirit, both on stage and in his music videos. The Zurich artist's peculiar gestures evoke those of the late Joe Cocker. On his website, rudimentarily created, Dino Brandão focuses on the essentials, listing mainly just the dates of his next concerts across Europe. You may be able to see him somewhere close to you.

STÉPHANE HERZOG