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Writing, Poetry, book reviews, interviews, music reviews,
contests, art

A Fevers of the Mind Quick-9 Interview with Gerald Jatzek





with Gerald Jatzek:

Q1: When did you start writing and first influences?

Gerald: I started to write a book when I was eight. When I had finished the second chapter, we formed a soccer team, and I forgot about my plans.

Q2: Who are your biggest influences today?

Gerald: That's a difficult one. I tried to learn from Kavafis, Mayakovsky, Ritsos, Eluard, Parra and others. And, well, Kafka is not an influence; he is the godfather of modern literature.

Q3: Where did you grow up and how did that influence your writing/art? Have any travels away from home influence your work?

Gerald: I come from a working class neighborhood in Vienna, which means I grew up bilingually in Standard German and Viennese dialect and its different occurrences in the form of sociolects.

Traveling was especially important when I was young and felt like suffocating in the conservative Viennese atmosphere where the elders suffered from amnesia regarding the atrocities of the Nazi era.

Q4: What do you consider the most meaningful work you've done creatively so far to you?

Gerald: My poems for children.

Q5: Any pivotal moment when you knew you wanted to be an artist/poet/writer?

Gerald:

As I mentioned, I come from a strictly working class background. Accordingly, everybody I knew either worked (even mothers of five) or was out of work. I heard about artists and writers in school, but they belonged to another world.

I finished secondary education thanks to state grants – which were given to the likes of us for the first time in Austrian history after the social democrats were elected in 1971.

After school I studied to become a teacher and worked in what nowadays are called McJobs. It all changed during my second year. In June hundreds of activists squatted in the buildings of a former slaughterhouse and converted them into a complex of counterculture. Two months later I traveled overland to Afghanistan, India and Nepal. In Kathmandu I decided to make a living as a writer and journalist.

Q6: Favorite activities to relax?

Gerald: Guitar (mandolin, ukulele) playing; reading; etymology and languages; evenings with friends, wine, and music; traveling; relaxing in Greece.

Q7: Any recent or forthcoming projects that you'd like to promote?

Gerald: I have nothing to promote right now. I'm working on a manuscript with very short stories and a book with Viennese anecdotes (both in German). A collection of poetry for children in English is nearly finished, but I have no idea where to publish it.

Q8: What is a favorite line/stanza from a poem or song of yours? Any favorite piece of art?

Gerald: From "The sea" (work in progress): " seven trillion lines of code, this poem / hijacked by guerilla currents"

Octavio Paz: "I search for an instant alive as a bird" ("Busco una fecha viva como un pájaro")

Q9: Who has helped you most with writing?

Gerald: A lot of people who don't know. Sometimes, I overhear a half-sentence from a conversation on the street, or I read a line from a torn poster, and it's a powerful writing prompt.

Poetry from Anthologies by Gerald Jatzek <

[https://feversofthemind.com/2021/06/03/poetry-from-anthologies-by-gerald-jatzek/>](https://feversofthemind.com/2021/06/03/poetry-from-anthologies-by-gerald-jatzek/)

Poetry: No Miracles to Come by Gerald Jatzek <

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Poetry: Holiday Mass by Gerald Jatzek <

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By davidlonan1

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