

GREAT JONES STREET Ausschreibung eines öffentlichen Übersetzungswettbewerbs

Der Deutsche Übersetzerfonds veranstaltet aus Anlass seines 20-jährigen Jubiläums einen öffentlichen Übersetzungswettbewerb. Gemeinsam mit der *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung* greift er eine Initiative der Freien Akademie der Künste in Hamburg auf, die 1965 eine Prosaskizze von Graham Greene zur Übersetzung ausschrieb, um sich ein Bild der Lage des literarischen Übersetzens in der Bundesrepublik zu verschaffen. Die eingesandten Übersetzungen veranlassten Dieter E. Zimmer damals nicht nur zu einem Register übersetzerischer Sünden, sondern auch zu einem Grundsatztext über ‚die einstweilige Unentbehrlichkeit des Humantranslators‘, der heute noch Bestand hat. Gut fünfzig Jahre später sei die Frage erneut gestellt: Was ist eine gute Übersetzung? Wie hat sich die Übersetzungskultur hierzulande weiterentwickelt?

Gegenstand des Wettbewerbs ist **die deutsche Übersetzung eines Romananfangs: „Great Jones Street“**, ein frühes, 1973 im Original publiziertes und bislang noch nicht ins Deutsche übersetztes Werk eines der großen amerikanischen Autoren unserer Zeit, **Don DeLillo**. Der Wettbewerb ist offen für Profis wie für Laien gleichermaßen. Begutachtet werden die in der Geschäftsstelle des Deutschen Übersetzerfonds anonymisierten Einsendungen von einer Fachjury, die aus der Übersetzerin **Miriam Mandelkow**, den Übersetzern **Ulrich Blumenbach** und **Andreas Jandl**, der Cheflektorin des Kiepenheuer&Witsch Verlages **Kerstin Gleba** sowie dem Literaturkritiker und Redakteur der *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung* **Andreas Platthaus** besteht. Die Jury achtet auf eine präzise Übertragung nicht nur des Inhalts des Ausgangstexts, sondern auch seiner Zwischentöne, der Stillage, Assoziationen, Anspielungen usw. Die Entscheidung fällt bis Ende September. Der Name der Gewinnerin oder des Gewinners wird bei der Jubiläumsfeier am 19./20. Oktober 2017 bekanntgegeben. Die beste Übersetzung wird mit einem Preisgeld von 2.000 Euro prämiert und in der *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung* publiziert.

Einreichungen sind bis zum 31. Juli 2017 mit Angaben zur Person (Name, Anschrift, Telefonnummer, Mailadresse) per mail an wettbewerb@uebersetzerfonds.de zu senden. Der Rechtsweg ist ausgeschlossen.

Wir danken der Kulturstiftung der Länder für die Förderung unserer Initiative.

Don DeLillo
Great Jones Street

5 Fame requires every kind of excess. I mean true fame, a devouring neon, not
the somber renown of waning statesmen or chinless kings. I mean long
journeys across gray space. I mean danger, the edge of every void, the
circumstance of one man imparting an erotic terror to the dreams of the
republic. Understand the man who must inhabit these extreme regions,
10 monstrous and vulval, damp with memories of violation. Even if half-mad he
is absorbed into the public's total madness; even if fully rational, a bureaucrat
in hell, a secret genius of survival, he is sure to be destroyed by the public's
contempt for survivors. Fame, this special kind, feeds itself on outrage, on
what the counselors of lesser men would consider bad Publicity - hysteria in
15 limousines, knife fights in the audience, bizarre litigation, treachery,
pandemonium and drugs. Perhaps the only natural law attaching to true fame
is that the famous man is compelled, eventually, to commit suicide.

(Is it clear I was a hero of rock 'n' roll?)

20 Toward the end of the final tour it became apparent that our audience
wanted more than music, more even than its own reduplicated noise. It's
possible the culture had reached its limit, a point of severe tension. There was
less sense of simple visceral abandon at our concerts during these last weeks.
Few cases of arson and vandalism. Fewer still of rape. No smoke bombs or
threats of worse explosives. Our followers, in their isolation, were not
25 concerned with precedent now. They were free of old saints and martyrs, but
fearfully so, left with their own unlabeled flesh. Those without tickets didn't
storm the barricades, and during a performance the boys and girls directly
below us, scratching at the stage, were less murderous in their love of me, as
if realizing finally that my death, to be authentic, must be self-willed - a
30 successful piece of instruction only if it occurred by my own hand, preferably
in a foreign city. I began to think their education would not be complete until
they outdid me as teacher, until one day they merely pantomimed the kind of
massive response the group was used to getting. As we performed they would
jump, dance, collapse, clutch each other, wave their arms, all the while
35 making absolutely no sound. We would stand in the incandescent pit of a
huge stadium filled with wildly rippling bodies, all totally silent. Our recent
music, deprived of people's screams, was next to meaningless, and there
would have been no choice but to stop playing. A profound joke it would
have been. A lesson in something or other.

40 In Houston I left the group, saying nothing, and boarded a plane for
New York City, that contaminated shrine, place of my birth. I knew Azarian
would assume leadership of the band, his body being prettiest. As to the rest,
I left them to their respective uproars – news media, promotion people,
agents, accountants, various members of the managerial peerage. The public
45 would come closer to understanding my disappearance than anyone else. It
was not quite as total as the act they needed and nobody could be sure
whether I was gone for good. For my closest followers, it foreshadowed a
period of waiting. Either I'd return with a new language for them to speak or
they'd seek a divine silence attendant to my own.

50 I took a taxi past the cemeteries toward Manhattan, tides of ash-light
breaking across the spires. New York seemed older than the cities of Europe,
a sadistic gift of the sixteenth century, ever on the verge of plague. The cab
driver was young, however, a freckled kid with a moderate orange Afro. I
told him to take the tunnel.

55 „Is there a tunnel?” he said.

The night before, at the Astrodome, the group had appeared without
me. Azarian's stature was vast but nothing on that first night could have
broken the crowd's bleak mood. They turned against the structure itself,
smashing whatever was smashable, trying to rip up the artificial turf,
60 attacking the very plumbing. The gates were opened and the police entered,
blank-looking, hiding the feast in their minds behind metered eyes. They
made their patented charges, cracking arms and legs in an effort to protect
the concept of regulated temperature. In one of the worst public statements
of the year, by anyone, my manager Globke referred to the police operation
65 as an example of mini-genocide.

„The tunnel goes under the river. It's a nice tunnel with white tile walls
and men in glass cages counting the cars going by. One two three four. One
two three.“

70 I was interested in endings, in how to survive a dead idea. What came
next for the wounded of Houston might very well depend on what I was able
to learn beyond certain personal limits, in endland, far from the tropics of
fame.

75 (Don DeLillo, *Great Jones Street*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1973, 1. Kapitel)