

WESTFÄLISCHE  
WILHELMS-UNIVERSITÄT  
MÜNSTER

August Stramm

*YOU. Lovepoems*

& Posthumous Love Poems

A Centenary Commemoration

Translation and Essay by Susanne Fiessler

BLÜTE

von

AUGUST STRAMM.

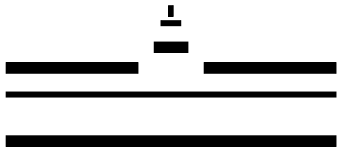


Diamanten wandern über's Wasser!  
Ausgereckte Arme  
Spannt der falbe Staub zur Sonne!  
Blüten wiegen im Haar!  
Geperrt  
Verästelt  
Spinnen Schleier!  
Duften  
Bleiche mätte weisse  
Schleier!  
Rosa, scheu gedämpft, verschimmert  
Zittern Flecken  
Lippen, Lippen  
Durstig, krause, heisse Lippen!  
Blüten! Blüten!  
Küsse! Wein!  
Roter  
Goldner  
Rauscher  
Wein!  
Du und Ich!  
Ich und Du!  
Du ?!



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MÜNSTER**

Wissenschaftliche Schriften der WWU Münster

# Reihe I

**Band 3**

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Published on behalf of the University Library of Münster  
by Reinhard Feldmann

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August Stramm, Susanne Fiessler

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August Stramm’s business-card

(ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm)

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## Word of Welcome from the ULB Münster

*Post Inspector*

*“Great artist and dearest friend”*

(Herwarth Walden)

*Battalion Commander*

*“Forgotten German Poet”*

(Karl Krolow)

*Restless fine-tuner of his writings*

*“Strong, dauntless man”*

(Herwarth Walden)

*Librettist for Hindemith*

*“Avant-gardist and linguistic trailblazer”*

(Walter Gödden)

*Literary Revolutionary*

*“One of the few truly real stutterers”*

(Kasimir Edschmid)

*Expressionist*

*“Inventor of abstraction”*

(Walter Gödden)

*Language experimenter and Language reducer*

All this was August Stramm. All this, and so much more. And yet, as early as 1956, the leading German weekly newspaper “DIE ZEIT” listed him in the category of “Forgotten German Poets”. How can this be?

August Stramm was killed in action on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1915, aged 41, at the eastern front between what is now Poland and Belarus in Galicia. His literary discovery had begun only just two years earlier. After over twenty years of writing, condensing, rewriting, reworking, submitting and failures, the forty-year-old had finally achieved his breakthrough.

No-one less than Herwarth Walden, together with Alfred Döblin in 1910, the founder and publisher of the probably most important literary periodical of Expressionism, *DER STURM*, recognised the talent of the not quite so young author. In this magazine, Walden debuted the drama *Sancta*



*Susanna*, which later (1921) came to serve as a libretto for the opera by Paul Hindemith. With this, Stramm finally finds himself in the environment where he belongs, that is, in the company of the illustrious writers of the *Sturm*: Max Brod, Anatole France, Oskar Kokoschka, Adolf Loos, and Heinrich Mann, to name but a few of the most important contemporaries. Equally, his influence on later generations is significant: Kurt Schwitters, Ernst Jandl, or Arno Schmidt owe a lot to Stramm.

Yet, during his lifetime his poetry was not only acclaimed, but at times even ridiculed. Things look better with his posthumous publications. Especially in the first years of the Weimar Republic, his works receive a certain success which was, however, measured by the literary content, rather moderate.

This was probably the reason for the extremely modest price that the library of the young University of Münster, only founded in 1902, had to pay for the transfer of his literary estate. In 1935, a letter from his widow Else Krafft-Stramm to the director of the University Library at the time, Karl Julius Hartmann, expresses her gratitude for the “understanding for, and interest in the great art of a writer misunderstood by so many, who still enlightens my life to date, because he was there ...and still is...”.

She also characterises Stramm’s work method again, writing to the library “how he literally wrestled with the word to find sound and form for his poetry, which, after earlier impressionist attempts, suddenly forged ahead so vehemently in his prime”. The literary estate (actually only a partial estate, because so much is probably lost) confirms this evaluation by his widow: Numerous transcripts, rewordings, inversions, deletions or amendments in one and the same poem explicitly prove his “wrestling with the word”.

Else Krafft-Stramm hopes for further success, as she writes: “I..., and with me the many followers of August Stramm, still strongly hope that his works will yet be resurrected and live, because such a great spirit simply remains immortal”. Stramm was not alive to witness all this, including his renaissance in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He dies, as so many avant-gardists, in a battle at the eastern front. In the *STURM*, dated “Berlin on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 1915. On arrival of his death notice”, his friend and mentor Herwarth Walden calls out after him: “You shine forever”.

The University and State Library Münster is fortunate to hold the literary estate of this extraordinary writer. It has been fully reviewed, and we are overjoyed to be able to make it available for research. The estate, though small in volume, is an important source for the study of literature and contemporary history:

<http://www.ulb.uni-muenster.de/sammlungen/nachlaesse/nachlass-stramm.html>

Also, we are excited and grateful that, with this book, Susanne Fiessler presents the translation of “DU. Liebesgedichte” from the first edition of 1915, as well as further posthumous love-poems. She has found the apt, concise, and gripping words to translate and rewrite this collection into English. In her extensive essay she casts a light on many new aspects of this poet and his reception. Equally outstanding are her explanations and detailed description of her translation principles and the pitfalls involved.

I wish the English version of these “thundering mono-words [and] lightening one-strikes” (Kurt Pinthus) a thriving success, in the same sense that August Stramm himself had intended: World-wide!

Reinhard Feldmann (ULB Münster)

# Prologue

by Rosalin Blue

## Oh Stramm

Ich schreibe Dich  
Du strammst mich an  
Rosalinblüten blau

Das Leben  
Packt  
Aus  
Deinem Wort  
Mich Ganz

Hören Horchen  
Ohr am Puls  
Herzschlag und Tanz

Erleben  
Lebt  
– Du!

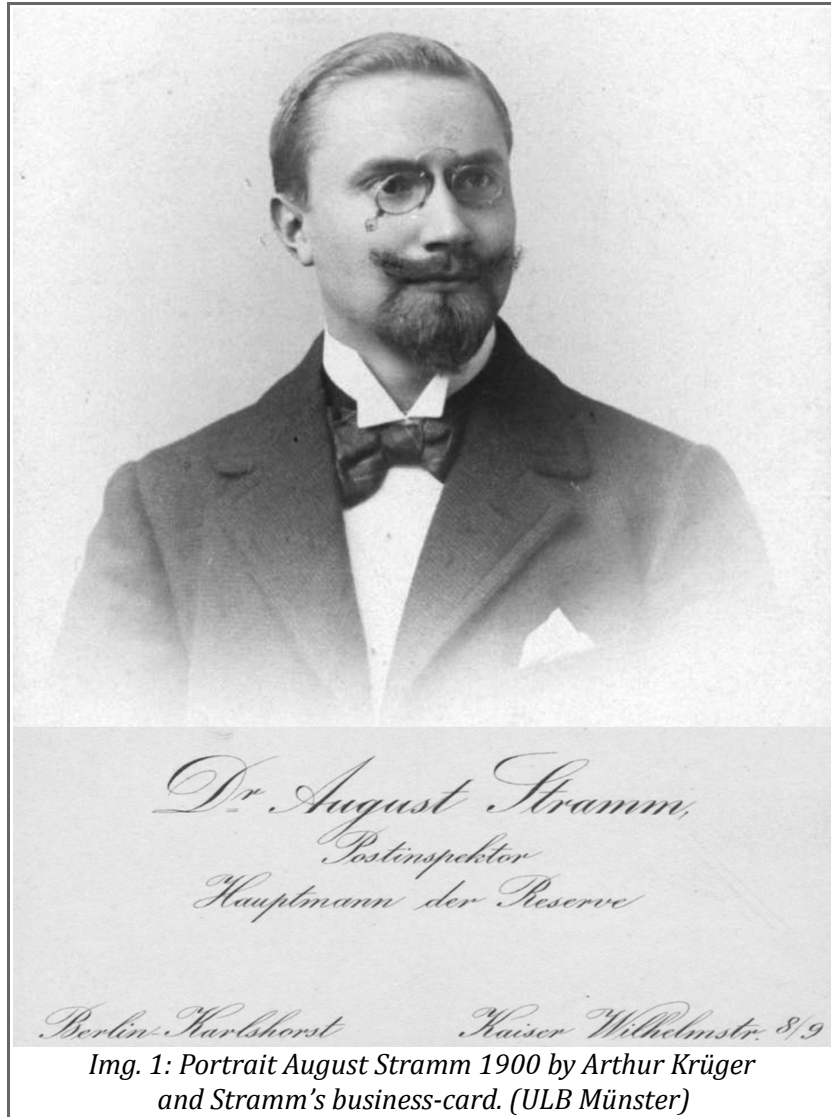
## Oh Stramm

I'm writing You  
You stramm me on  
Rosalinblossom blue

Life  
grips  
from  
your word  
my soul

Hearing listening  
Ear on pulse  
Heartbeat and dance

Living  
lives  
– You!



Dedicated to:

**August Stramm  
(1874 - 1915)**

With Love  
For You

**Centenary Commemoration**



**August Stramm**

**YOU**

**Lovepoems**

& Posthumous Love Poems

**A Centenary Commemoration**

Translation and Essay by  
**Susanne Fiessler**

2015



P. 1914. 4126  
AUGUST STRAMM

DU  
LIEBESGEDICHTE



VERLAG DER STURM  
BERLIN 1915

*Img. 2: Original title-page of DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE. Berlin 1915. (Staatsbibliothek Berlin)*



## **Love-Duel**

The Wanting stands

You flee and flee

Not holding

Seeking not

I

Want

You

Not !

The Wanting stands

and rips the walls down

The Wanting stands

and ebbs the streams off

The Wanting stands

and shrinks the miles within it

The Wanting stands

and gasps and gasps

and gasps

before you !

Before you

and hating

Before you

and wrestling

Before you

and bowing way

and

## **Liebeskampf**

Das Wollen steht

Du fliehst und fliehst

Nicht halten

Suchen nicht

Ich

Will

Dich

Nicht !

Das Wollen steht

Und reißt die Wände nieder

Das Wollen steht

Und ebbt die Ströme ab

Das Wollen steht

Und schrumpft die Meilen in sich

Das Wollen steht

Und keucht und keucht

Und keucht

Vor dir !

Vor dir

und hassen

Vor dir

Und wehren

Vor dir

Und beugen sich

Und

sinking  
stomping  
stroking  
cursing  
blessing  
turn for turn  
the round round hustling world !  
The Wanting stands !  
Events evolve !  
In equal clench  
press our hands  
And our tears  
well  
up  
the equal stream !  
The Wanting stands !  
Not You !  
Not at You !  
The Wanting stands !  
Not  
I !

Sinken  
Treten  
Streicheln  
Fluchen  
Segnen  
Um und um  
Die runde runde hetze Welt !  
Das Wollen steht!  
Geschehn geschieht !  
Im gleichen Krampfe  
Pressen unsre Hände  
Und unsre Tränen  
Wellen  
Auf  
Den gleichen Strom !  
Das Wollen steht !  
Nicht Du !  
Nicht Dich !  
Das Wollen steht !  
Nicht  
Ich !

## **Rendezvous**

The gateway lures with stripey ribbons

My staff chides

Clink

the cheeky-splayed kerbstone.

The chuckle

spooks

through darkness

Cheat-angled

into

warm quivers

stumble

hastily

the thoughts.

A black kiss

shyly thieves off out the gate

Whirr

The streetlight's glint

flashes

after

it

into the lane.

## **Verabredung**

Der Torweg fängt mit streifen Bändern ein

Mein Stock schilt

Klirr

Den frechgespreizten Prellstein.

Das Kichern

Schrickt

Durch Dunkel

Trügeneckend

In

Warmes Beben

Stolpern

Hastig

Die Gedanken.

Ein schwarzer Kuss

Stiehlt scheu zum Tor hinaus

Flirr

Der Laternenschein

Hellt

Nach

Ihm

In die Gasse.

## **Moongaze**

To my eyes ties the shine.  
The slumber glimmers into your chamber  
Yellows high up  
and  
sultries me !  
Languid  
pales the bed  
and  
strips all covers  
Naughty pulls the shirt  
frostled  
over the moon.  
Now  
you gleam  
You  
gleam gleam !  
Glazed  
blues the hand  
into woeglowing void  
Tears after it the sky  
Moon and stars  
plunge  
flail around me  
Whirling  
Feeling  
Halt Halt Halt !

## **Mondblick**

An meine Augen spannt der Schein.  
Das Schläfern glimmt in deine Kammer  
Gelbt hoch hinauf  
Und  
Schwület mich !  
Matt  
Bleicht das Bett  
Und  
Streift die Hüllen  
Stülpt frech das Hemd  
Verfröstelt  
Auf den Mond.  
Jetzt  
Leuchtest du  
Du  
Leuchtest leuchtest !  
Glast  
Blaut die Hand  
In glühewehe Leere  
Reißt nach den Himmel  
Mond und Sterne  
Stürzen  
Schlagen um mich  
Wirbeln  
Tasten  
Halt Halt Halt !



And  
shiver out to rest  
in their old place !  
In  
your window above  
yawndozed  
winks  
the night !

Und  
Zittern aus zu Ruh  
Am alten Platz !  
In  
Deinem Fenster droben  
Gähnmüd  
Blinzt  
Die Nacht !

## **Fulfilment**

My spurs lip-tease your tips  
Blueish capillaries giggle forth  
Smirking in safety  
in  
shimmery smooth  
Quivery hills wave desire  
Budlets rozen up and steeple promise.  
Lips devour themselves!  
Golden wringers slither downwards  
and string the throat tight  
For my fingers fumbles your blood  
and seethes the romp.  
Souls wrestle and roll aside !  
Skirts cast the eye up high  
Gold-light-red  
Red-soft-red  
Flame zoshes the brain  
and stabs out my gaze !  
Sinking sinking  
Floating and sinking  
Swinging storm-like  
in the storm  
in the screamrolling sea !  
Clinker-red  
above us blesses Death  
Seeding Death !

## **Erfüllung**

Meine Sporen frechzen deine Spitzen  
Bläulich kichern die Äderchen fort  
In Sicherheit höhnisch  
Im  
Schimmrigen Weich  
Bebige Hügel wiegen Verlangen  
Köpfchen rosen empor und steilen Gewähr.  
Die Lippe zerfrisst sich!  
Golden ringeln Würger hinunter  
Und schüren den Hals zu  
Nach meinen Fingern tastet dein Blut  
Und siedet den Kampf.  
Die Seelen ringen und kollern abseit !  
Hoch schlagen die Röcke den Blick auf  
Goldhellrot  
Rotweichrot  
Flamme zischt in das Hirn  
Und sticht mir das Schaun aus !  
Sinken Sinken  
Schweben und Sinken  
Schwingen im Sturme  
Im Sturm  
Im schreikrollen Meer !  
Ziegelrot  
Über uns segnet der Tod  
Säender Tod !

In his letter No. 8, from Berlin, 11<sup>th</sup> June 1914, Stramm exposes how intensely he works with sound and syllable when searching for the “only all-saying word”, as he writes to Herwarth Walden:

“I enclose the proof for you. There are a few small bits. Most noteworthy to me seems the second-last line, in which the word “schatzerpört” was turned into “schatzerstört”. [...] To me “schatzerpört” says more than the other. Shame and outrage [‘Empörung’] wrestle with each other and the shame crushes. Even “schatempört” does not express this by far; Further, the essence of the word “empören” in my understanding, does not lie in “em-”, which is only of linguistic importance, for the emotion the meaning of “empören” lies simply in “pören”, or even fully in the phonetic compound “pö”. Leave out the two dots by the way, and the whole expression crashes. That’s why I think, “schatzerpört” is the single all-saying word here. [...].”

*From: AUGUST STRAMM, ALLES IST GEDICHT. Briefe, Gedichte, Bilder, Dokumente.  
Jeremy Adler (Ed.), Zurich 1990, p. 15.*

## **Pleasurehouse**

Lights wanton from the windows

Contagion

sprawls at the door

and poses hoes'moaning out !

Women-souls blush lurid laughter !

Motherwombs gape infant death !

The Unborn

vapourly

sprites

between the rooms !

Shy

in the nook

shamedisraged

the genis

shrinks away !

## **Freudenhaus**

Lichte dirnen aus den Fenstern

Die Seuche

Spreitet an der Tür

Und bietet Weiberstöhnen aus !

Frauenseelen schämen grelle Lache !

Mutterschöße gähnen Kindestod !

Ungeborenes

Geistet

Dünstelnd

Durch die Räume !

Scheu

Im Winkel

Schamzerpört

Verkriecht sich

Das Geschlecht !

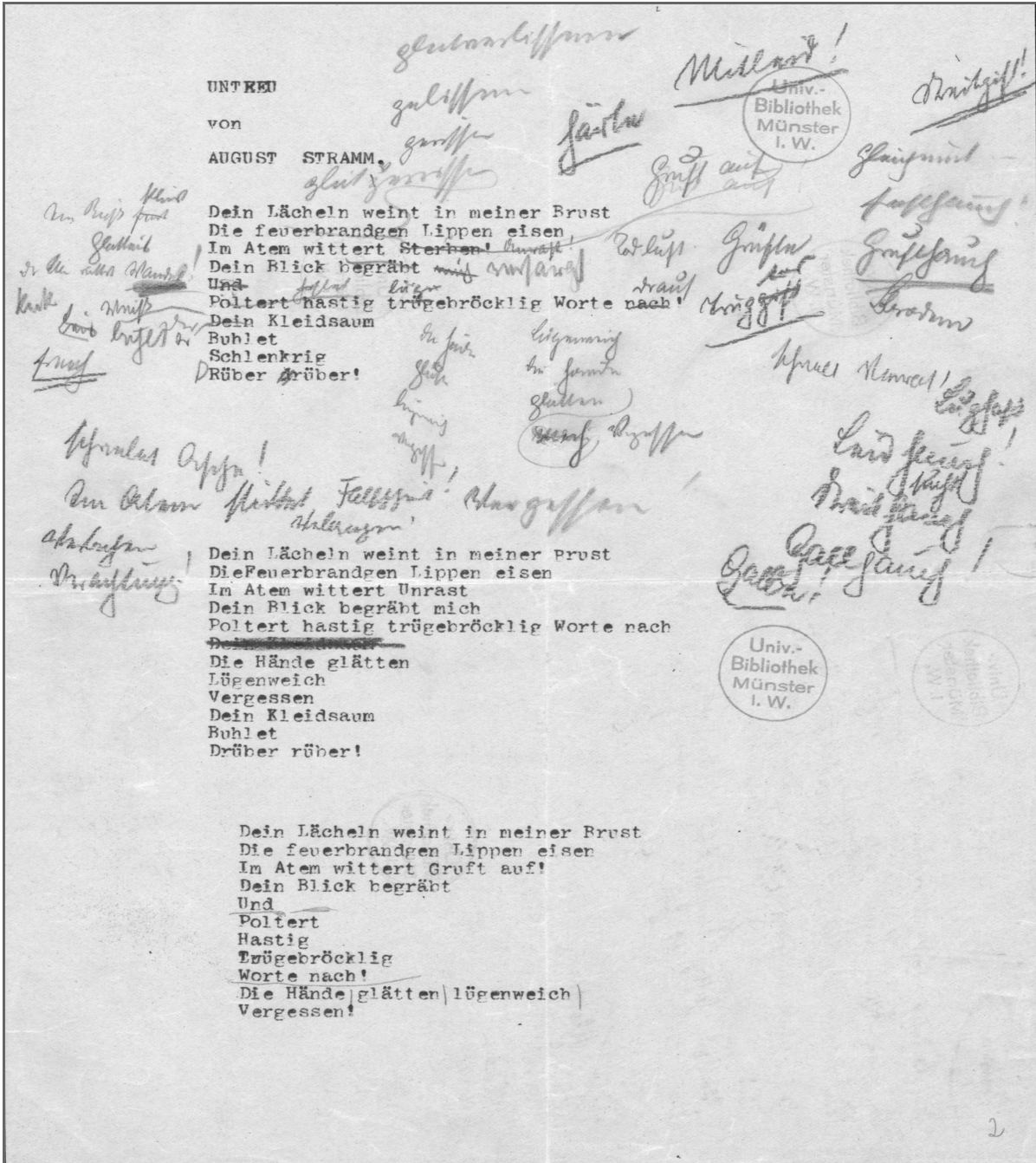
## **Wavermind**

My searching seeks !  
Many thousand wander I!  
I feel I  
and grasp You  
and hold you!  
Forelonging I !  
And You and You and You  
Many thousand You  
And forever You  
Omniways You  
Wildered  
whirling  
weirder  
evermore whorled  
through  
the turmoil  
You  
For you  
I !

## **Wankelmut**

Mein Suchen sucht !  
Viel tausend wandeln Ich !  
Ich taste Ich  
Und fasse Du  
Und halte Dich !  
Versehne Ich !  
Und Du und Du und Du  
Viel tausend Du  
Und immer Du  
Allwege Du  
Wirr  
Wirren  
Wirrerr  
Immer wirrer  
Durch  
Die Wirrnis  
Du  
Dich  
Ich !





Img. 3: Three original typescripts of 'Untreu' (ULB Münster).

## **Untrue**

Your smile is weeping in my heart  
The emberbitten lips are icing  
In the breath whiffs leaves-wither !  
Your look entombs  
and  
tosses tumbling words ontop.  
Forget –  
the hands brittle after !  
Frank  
your gownfringe courts  
dangly  
across over !

## **Untreu**

Dein Lächeln weint in meiner Brust  
Die glutverbissnen Lippen eisen  
Im Atem wittert Laubwelk !  
Dein Blick versargt  
Und  
Hastet polternd Worte drauf.  
Vergessen  
Bröckeln nach die Hände !  
Frei  
Buhlt dein Kleidsaum  
Schlenkriig  
Drüber rüber !

## **Ardour**

My weakness barely clings  
to its own hands  
Your ankles play  
catchball  
with my strength !  
In your pace sizzles  
away  
my reason  
and  
in your eyeground  
dies  
my last will !  
Your breeze blows me asunder  
screamful in desire  
Cool  
your flirt curls  
into its own  
hair  
smiling  
my ordeal !

## **Siede**

Meine Schwäche hält sich mühsam  
An den eigenen Händen  
Mit meinen Kräften  
Spielen deine Knöchel  
Fangeball !  
In deinem Schreiten knistert  
Hin  
Mein Denken  
Und  
Dir im Auggrund  
Stirbt  
Mein letztes Will !  
Dein Hauch zerweht mich  
Schreivoll in Verlangen  
Kühl  
Kränzt dein Tändeln  
In das Haar  
Sich  
Lächelnd  
Meine Qual !

## **Etiquette**

My eyes are swaying in your boobs  
Your head bows glowing velvet shade  
ontop !

The breath abashes inhibiting  
the weighty surge.

Lust hooks me  
and raw aromas bleed

Reason  
rattles  
in its chains.

Civil  
Shyness pinches the lips smiling  
colder !

Just my arm  
seizes

You  
swirling  
hotter hot !

## **Verhalten**

Meine Augen schwingen in deinen Brüsten  
Dein Haupt beugt glutrot weichen Schatten  
Drauf !  
Der Atem schämigt hemmend  
Das Gewoge.  
Mich krallt die Gier  
Und herbe Dünste bluten  
In seinen Ketten  
Rüttelt  
Der Verstand.  
Fein  
Knifft die Scheu die Lippen lächelnd  
Kälter !  
Mein Arm nur  
Fasst  
Im Schwung  
Dich  
Heißer heiß !

## **Passing**

The house sparks in the stars  
My steps restrain and freeze.  
In your bosom sleeps my brain.  
Doubts devour me !  
Full  
Your bust shadows in the window  
The Spying veils me silent  
Stars streakle glowing iron  
My heart  
cinders !  
At your window  
ices  
a windbreeze ash.  
The feet drag onward empty load !

## **Vorübergehn**

Das Haus flackt in den Sternen

Mein Schritt verhält und friert.

In deinem Schoße schläft mein Hirn.

Mich fressen Zweifel !

Voll

Schattet deine Büste in dem Fenster

Das Spähen hüllt mich lautlos

Die Sterne streifeln glühes Eisen

Mein Herz

Zerkohlt !

An deinem Fenster

Eist

Ein Windhauch Asche.

Die Füße tragen weiter leere Last !



## **Answered**

The Breathing blows  
and  
thrusts the barricades  
The Blowing quakes  
and  
shakes the hold to ground  
The Breathing howls  
and  
stirs the riven depth  
The Howling swirls  
and  
sobs the heartblood out.  
The Breathing storms  
and  
razes time to aeons  
The Storming falls  
and  
whirls into inexistence !  
You  
breathes  
the  
You !  
And  
Breathing breathing  
breathing  
storms  
You !

## **Erhört**

Das Hauchen weht

Und

Wirft die Widerstände

Das Wehen bebt

Und

Schüttelt Halt zu Boden

Das Hauchen braust

Und

Wirrt die wühle Tiefe

Das Brausen schwirrt

Und

Schluchzt das Herzblut auf.

Das Hauchen stürmt

Und

Reißt die Zeit in Ewig

Das Stürmen stürzt

Und

Wirbelt in das Nichtsein !

Du

Haucht

Das

Du !

Und

Hauchen Hauchen

Hauchen

Stürmet

Du !

## **Dream**

Through the bushes twindle stars

Eyes dive blacken sink

Whisper splashes

Bloomings yearn

Perfumes sprinkle

Showers threshing

Winds welling squalling swelling

Fabrics fissure

Falling shrieks into abysmal night.

## **Traum**

Durch die Büsche winden Sterne

Augen tauchen blaken sinken

Flüstern plätschert

Blüten gehren

Düfte spritzen

Schauer stürzen

Winde schnellen prellen schwellen

Tücher reißen

Fallen schrickt in tiefe Nacht.

Zwist

Gallen foltern bäumen lösen  
 Knirschen zürnen meiden Hass  
 Zittern stampfen schäumen grämen  
 Suchen heben forschen bang  
 Wenden zagen schauen langen  
 Stehen rühren seufzen gehn  
 Streicheln klagen  
 Kosen schelten  
 Schämen schmächt  
 Und  
 Flichen wirbt  
 Schmiegen wehret  
 Armen sträubet  
 Quälen küsst  
 Vergessen  
 Lacht!

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Img. 4: Stramm's original manuscript of 'Zwist' ('Quarrel'). (ULB Münster)

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AUGUST STRAMM.

Zwist.

Gallen foltern bäumen lösen  
 Knirschen zürnen meiden Hass  
 Zittern stampfen schäumen grämen  
 Suchen heben forschen bang  
 Wenden zagen schauen langen  
 Stehen rühren seufzen gehn  
 Streicheln klagen  
 Kosen schelten  
 Schämen schmächt  
 Und  
 Flichen wirbt  
 Schmiegen wehret  
 Armen sträubet  
 Quälen küsst  
 Vergessen  
 Lacht!

Img. 5: Original typescript of 'Zwist' ('Quarrel'). (ULB Münster)

## Quarrel

Galling vexing rearing venting  
grinding seething shunning hate  
Shaking stomping foaming grieving  
searching quaking questing fraid  
Turning stalling looking longing  
standing stirring sighing leave  
Stroking groaning  
Soothing scolding  
Shaming spurns  
and  
Fleeing charms  
Snuggling wrestles  
Bracing bristles  
Anguish kisses  
Forgetting  
laughs !

## **Zwist**

Gallen foltern bäumen lösen  
Knirschen zürnen meiden Hass  
Zittern stampfen schäumen grämen  
Suchen beben forschen bang  
Wenden zagen schauen langen  
Stehen rühren seufzen gehn  
Streicheln klagen  
Kosen schelten  
Schämen schmächt  
Und  
Fliehen wirbt  
Schmiegen wehret  
Armen sträubet  
Quälen küsst  
Vergessen  
Lacht !

## **Dis-paired**

Above shatters a glaring stone

Night grains glass

The times stand

I

stone.

Far

glazes

You !

## **Verzweifelt**

Droben schmettert ein greller

Stein

Nacht grant Glas

Die Zeiten stehn

Ich

Steine.

Weit

Glast

Du !

## **Gloom**

Striding striving

Living yearns

Shuddering standing

Looks search

Dying booms

The Coming

Shrieks !

Deep

mute

We.

## **Schwermut**

Schreiten Streben

Leben sehnt

Schauern Stehen

Blicke suchen

Sterben wächst

Das Kommen

Schreit !

Tief

Stummen

Wir.



## **Secrecy**

The Listening speaks  
Embers moisten  
Shudders peek  
Blood sighs up  
Your knee leans still  
The sizzling streams  
surge  
hot  
to ocean  
and  
our souls  
swirl  
in  
to  
one.

## **Heimlichkeit**

Das Horchen spricht  
Gluten klammen  
Schauer schielen  
Blut seufzt auf  
Dein Knie lehnt still  
Die heißen Ströme  
Brausen  
Heiß  
Zu Meere  
Und  
Unsere Seelen  
Rauschen  
Ein  
In  
Sich.

## **Moonshine**

Pale and snoozy  
Snug and smooth  
Catkins winding  
Blossoms murmur  
Waters lapping  
Winds aweping  
Shine unveils the tippled breasts  
Feeling moans into my hand.

## **Mondschein**

Bleich und müde  
Schmiege und weich  
Kater duften  
Blüten graunen  
Wasser schlecken  
Winde schluchzen  
Schein entblößt die zitzen Brüste  
Fühlen stöhnt in meine Hand.

## **Longing**

The hands strain  
Numbness trembles  
Earth roots to Earth  
Your nearing fars  
The pace founders  
Standing chases past  
One look  
holds  
Is !  
Crazevoid  
selfs !

## **Sehnen**

Die Hände strecken  
Starre bebt  
Erde wächst an Erde  
Dein Nahen fernt  
Dein Schritt ertrinkt  
Das Stehen jagt vorüber  
Ein Blick  
Hat  
Ist !  
Wahnichtig  
Icht !

## **Reunion**

Your pace trembles  
In viewing dies the glance  
The wind  
toys  
faded ties.  
You  
turn  
away !  
Time is wooing space !

## **Wiedersehen**

Dein Schreiten bebt  
In Schauen stirbt der Blick  
Der Wind  
Spielt  
Blasse Bänder.  
Du  
Wendest  
Fort !  
Den Raum umwirbt die Zeit !

## **Blossom**

Diamonds roam across the water !

Outstretched arms

spans the fallow dust to sun !

Blossoms sway in the hair !

Pearled

entwiggled

webbing veils !

Scenting

white faint milky

veils !

Rosy, coyly hushed, illumined

quiver patches

Lips, lips

thirsty, puckered, sultry lips !

Blossoms ! Blossoms !

Kisses ! Wine !

Red

golden

rousing

wine !

You and I !

I and You !

You ?!

## **Blüte**

Diamanten wandern übers Wasser !

Ausgereckte Arme

Spannt der falbe Staub zur Sonne !

Blüten wiegen im Haar !

Geperlt

Verästelt

Spinnen Schleier !

Duften

Weißer matte bleiche

Schleier !

Rosa, scheu gedämpft, verschimmert

Zittern Flecken

Lippen, Lippen

Durstig, krause, heiße Lippen !

Blüten ! Blüten !

Küsse ! Wein !

Roter

Goldner

Rauscher

Wein !

Du und Ich !

Ich und Du !

Du ?!

## **Gloaming**

Light wakes dark  
Dark wards shine  
Space explodes the rooms  
Wisps drowning in loneliness !  
The soul dances  
and  
swings and swings  
and  
pulses in space  
You !  
My limbs seek themselves  
My limbs spoon themselves  
My limbs  
swinging sinking sinking drowning  
in  
Unboundedness  
You !  
  
Light wards dark  
Dark engulfs shine !  
The room drowns in loneliness  
The Soul  
swirls  
writhes  
Hold !

## **Dämmerung**

Hell weckt Dunkel  
Dunkel wehrt Schein  
Der Raum zersprengt die Räume  
Fetzen ertrinken in Einsamkeit !  
Die Seele tanzt  
Und  
Schwingt und schwingt  
Und  
Bebt im Raum  
Du !  
Meine Glieder suchen sich  
Meine Glieder kosen sich  
Meine Glieder  
Schwingen sinken sinken ertrinken  
In  
Unermesslichkeit  
Du !

Hell wehrt Dunkel  
Dunkel frisst Schein !  
Der Raum ertrinkt in Einsamkeit  
Die Seele  
Strudelt  
Sträubet  
Halt !



My limbs  
whirling  
in  
Unboundedness  
You !

Light is shine !  
Loneliness slurps !  
Unboundedness streams  
Severs  
me  
in  
You !  
You !

Meine Glieder  
Wirbeln  
In  
Unermesslichkeit  
Du !

Hell ist Schein !  
Einsamkeit schlürft !  
Unermesslichkeit strömt  
Zerreißt  
Mich  
In  
Du !  
Du !

## Wonder

You stands ! You stands !

And I

And I

I wing

spaceless timeless poiseless

You stands ! You stands !

And

whirling bears me

I

bear my self !

You !

You !

You charms the time

You arcs the sphere

You souls the mind

You blinks the eye

You

orbs the world

the world

the world !

I

orbit space !

And you

And you

## **Wunder**

Du steht ! Du steht !

Und ich

Und ich

Ich winge

Raumlos zeitlos wäglos

Du steht ! Du steht !

Und

Rasen bäret mich

Ich

Bär mich selber !

Du !

Du !

Du bannt die Zeit

Du bogt der Kreis

Du seelt der Geist

Du blickt der Blick

Du

Kreist die Welt

Die Welt

Die Welt !

Ich

Kreis das All !

Und du

Und du

You  
stand  
The  
Wonder !

Du  
Stehst  
Das  
Wunder !

## **Gorgeous**

Knowing charming  
True and trayaal  
Slaying birthing  
Dying be  
Weeping cheering  
Hate receding  
Strong and soft  
Unearthly  
can !  
Your body flares !  
The World  
fades out !

## **Schön**

Wissen Tören  
Wahr und Trügen  
Mord Gebären  
Sterben Sein  
Weinen Jubeln  
Hass Vergehen  
Stark und Schwach  
Unmöglich  
Kann !  
Dein Körper flammt !  
Die Welt  
Erlischt !

## **Urge**

Startling striving  
writhing wrestling  
gasping sobbing  
falling

You !

Dazzling lusting  
squirming clenching  
sizzling swooning

I and You !

Loosing gliding  
moaning welling  
melting finding

I

For you

You !

## **Trieb**

Schrecken Sträuben

Wehren Ringen

Ächzen Schluchzen

Stürzen

Du !

Grellen Gehren

Winden Klammern

Hitzen Schwächen

Ich und Du !

Lösen Gleiten

Stöhnen Wellen

Schwinden Finden

Ich

Dich

Du !



## **Encounter**

Your walk smiles into me  
and  
yanks the heart.  
The nodding hooks and strains.  
In the shade of your skirt  
entangles  
Swerving  
slings  
slaps !  
You sway and weigh  
My grasping snatches blind.  
The sun laughs out !  
And  
dopey dither founders forth  
Bereft bereft !

## **Begegnung**

Dein Gehen lächelt in mich über  
Und  
Reißt das Herz.  
Das Nicken hakt und spannt.  
Im Schatten deines Rocks  
Verhaspelt  
Schlingern  
Schleudert  
Klatscht !  
Du wiegst und wiegst.  
Mein Greifen haschet blind.  
Die Sonne lacht !  
Und  
Blödes Zagen lahmet fort  
Beraubt beraubt !

## **Curse**

You writhe and struggle !

Infernos roar

Flames

scorch !

Not I

Not You

Not at You !

Me !

Me !

## **Fluch**

Du sträubst und wehrst !

Die Brände heulen

Flammen

Sengen !

Nicht Ich

Nicht Du

Nicht Dich !

Mich !

Mich !

## **Play**

Your fingers purl

and

rolling nudging flirting pleasing

teasing wanting soothing pulsing

surge around me.

The chain bursts !

Your body rears up high !

Through lamp-light's glimmer sink your eyes

and drink me

and

slurping gulping

dawning

Gush !

The walls dive !

Space !

Just

You !

## **Spiel**

Deine Finger perlen

Und

Kollern Stoßen Necken Schmeicheln

Quälen Sinnen Schläfern Beben

Wogen um mich.

Die Kette reißt !

Dein Körper wächst empor !

Durch Lampenschimmer sinken deine Augen

Und schlürfen mich

Und

Schlürfen schlürfen

Dämmern

Brausen !

Die Wände tauchen !

Raum !

Nur

Du !

## **Almight**

Questing quering  
You bear answer  
Fleeing fearing  
You stand brave !  
Stench and rubbish  
You spread pureness  
False and malice  
You laugh right !  
Madness anguish  
You snug blissful  
Death and squalor  
You warm lush !  
High and chasm  
You arch pathways  
Hell 'n' Devil  
You reign God !

## **Allmacht**

Forschen Fragen  
Du trägst Antwort  
Fliehen Fürchten  
Du stehst Mut !  
Stank und Unrat  
Du breitst Reine  
Falsch und Tücke  
Du lachst Recht !  
Wahn Verzweiflung  
Du schmiegst Selig  
Tod und Elend  
Du wärmst Reich !  
Hoch und Abgrund  
Du bogst Wege  
Hölle Teufel  
Du siegst Gott !

## **Wooing**

Secret arcs the gate  
Earth and Heaven  
halting !  
Hoping !  
Bare unlocks your glance !  
Flash  
whirls and grasps  
and traces  
cramp in empty hands.  
Your smile forgoes.  
Shuttered gapes the gate.  
My hoping halts  
and  
God and Heaven pound !

## **Werben**

Geheimnis bogt das Tor  
Erde Himmel  
Harren !  
Harren !  
Auf schließt dein Blick !  
Blend  
Wirrt und greift  
Und tastet  
Krampf in leeren Händen.  
Dein Lächeln wehrt.  
Verschlossen blickt das Tor.  
Mein Harren harrt  
Und  
Gott und Himmel pochen !

## **Evewalk**

Through nestle night  
our footsteps hush along  
Hands shiver pale for clenching terror  
The shine slits sharp in silhouettes our heads  
in shadow  
Us !  
High glimms the star  
The poplar hangs aloft  
and  
heaves the Earth behind  
Sleepy Earth embraces naked Sky  
You see and shudder  
Your lips steam  
The Sky kisses  
and  
Us bears the Kiss !

## **Abendgang**

Durch schmiege Nacht  
Schweigt unser Schritt dahin  
Die Hände bangen blass um krampfes Grauen  
Der Schein sticht scharf in Schatten unser Haupt  
In Schatten  
Uns !  
Hoch flimmt der Stern  
Die Pappel hängt herauf  
Und  
Hebt die Erde nach  
Die schlafe Erde armt den nackten Himmel  
Du schaust und schauerst  
Deine Lippen dünsten  
Der Himmel küsst  
Und  
Uns gebärt der Kuss !



## Recall

Worlds silence forth from me

Worlds Worlds

black and faint and light !

Light in the light !

Glowing flashing flaring

weaving breezing living

nearing striding

striding

All the woely faded wishes

all the sharply quashed down tears

all the harshly taunted fears

all the coldly smothered embers

through the boilstream of my blood

through the burning of my tendons

through the flaring of the thoughts

storming storming

arching forging

move and pave

for You

the way

the way

the way

to me !

For You

the way

the I-enthundered

## **Erinnerung**

Welten schweigen aus mir raus

Welten Welten

Schwarz und fahl und licht !

Licht im Licht !

Glühen Flackern Lodern

Weben Schweben Leben

Nahen Schreiten

Schreiten

All die weh verklungenen Wünsche

All die harb zerrungenen Tränen

All die barsch verlachten Ängste

All die kalt erstickten Gluten

Durch den Siedstrom meines Blutes

Durch das Brennen meiner Sehnen

Durch die Lohe der Gedanken

Stürmen stürmen

Bogen bahnen

Regen wegen

Dir

Den Weg

Den Weg

Den Weg

Zu mir !

Dir

Den Weg

Den ich umbrausten

For You  
the way  
the you-enchanted  
For You  
the way  
the flame-dissevered  
For You  
the way  
the neverwandered  
ever  
found out way  
to  
me !

Dir  
Den Weg  
Den duumträumten  
Dir  
Den Weg  
Den flammzerrissenen  
Dir  
Den Weg  
Den unbegangenen  
Nie  
Gefundenen Weg  
Zu  
Mir !

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1915, Captain August Stramm fell at the eastern front near Horodec, now Belarus, shot in the head after more than 70 battles.



*Img. 6: August Stramm's grave in Horodec, Belarus. (ULB Münster)*



*Img. 7: August Stramm's last portrait, taken for a STURM postcard during his leave from the front at Christmas 1914 in Berlin. (ULB Münster)*

## **Posthumous Love Poems**

## **Unrequited**

Looks sear bare scars  
Your closeness asks and haunts  
and  
harrows answer.  
On my soul mourns  
your yearnglow-weighed head.  
The mouth curls  
hate  
and  
my looks snigger tauntle  
down  
at you !  
The closeness chokes  
and only distance  
breathes  
us two  
Peace Peace !

## **Unerwidert**

Die Blicke sengen kahle Male  
Dein Nahsein fragt und harrt  
Und  
Martert Antwort.  
Auf meiner Seele klagt  
Dein sehnglutschweres Haupt.  
Der Mund kraust  
Hass  
Und  
Meine Blicke kichern höhneln  
An dir  
Runter !  
Die Nähe würgt  
Und nur die Ferne  
Haucht  
Uns beiden  
Ruhe Ruhe !



## **Uncertain**

Torture

rueing

faltering

braving

Striding striding

waving

wanting

Speaking speaks

I speak

and

You must be there.

## **Unentschlossen**

Foltern

Reuen

Taumeln

Trotzen

Schreiten Schreiten

Winken

Wollen

Sprechen spricht

Ich spreche

Und

Du musst da sein.

## **Churchwalk**

The mountains chime

Your walk leaps suns

The hands sparkle

gleaming

starring

The steeple sundays

hums

Where are You.

## **Kirchgang**

Die Berge läuten

Dein Gang wippt Sonnen

Die Hände funkeln

Lichten

Sternen

Der Kirchturm sonntagt

Raunt

Wo bist Du.

# DER STURM

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**Inhalt:** Herwarth Walden: Kunststücke; Meisteratelier-Geheimnisse / Das Reich der Künste / Der neue Herr Direktor / August Stramm: Gedichte / Adolf Knoblauch: Hebräische Wanderung / Sophie van Leer: Gedichte / Desider Kosztolanyi: Appendicitis / Adolf Behne: Biologie und Kubismus / Notiz / Inhaltsverzeichnis Sechster Jahrgang / Erstes Halbjahr /

Der Hauptmann August Stramm ist am zweiten  
September in Rußland gefallen. Der Soldat und  
Ritter. Der Führer.

Du großer Künstler und liebster Freund.

Du leuchtest ewig.

Berlin am 16. September 1915  
Beim Eintreffen der Todesnachricht

Herwarth Walden

*Img. 8: Title-page of DER STURM, Vol. VI, No. 11/12 (September 1915)  
With commemoration by Herwarth Walden, dedicated to August Stramm.  
(Preußischer Kulturbesitz Staatsbibliothek Berlin)*

# **August Stramm – A Path into English**

## **Translating the Inner Experience**

*by Susanne Fiessler*



# August Stramm – A Path into English

## Translating the Inner Experience

*“For German literature, August Stramm is, what Wassily Kandinsky was for the visual arts [...]: The inventor of abstraction.”<sup>2</sup>*

Despite this striking point, August Stramm’s futuristic poetry is still widely unknown internationally. This is not just due to the fact that he was only published two years before he fell in WWI. Though first translations of his writings already appeared in 1914, the same year *DER STURM* printed the originals, the war-period left a big gap before next translations came out. Like that of many Expressionists, Stramm’s work was silenced by the Nazi regime and the post-war reception of Expressionism. Stramm was among the most innovative poets of his time, creating a unique poetic style of extreme intensity and concentration. On the outside, he was a picture-book citizen. On the inside, he was a modern artist. His poetry is abstract and full of emotion. Breaking with forms and morals of its time, it captures the eros of life. Stramm revolutionised language, by kneading and bending it to his needs of expression. His small, fascinating legacy stands comparison with the international avant-garde. Honoured as a pioneer of Modernism, Stramm modestly achieved for the German language, what James Joyce did for English.<sup>3</sup> Yet, even in literary Germany, his works are mainly debated academically, focussing on formal experiments. Although his reductive style has imprinted its influence on modern poetry and language deeper than literature lovers know, few poems are part of the German curriculum, and few are taught in other countries. The reason is, to some extent, the abstract nature of his writings.

*YOU. LOVEPOEMS* is a gift to August Stramm, celebrating his poetic achievements and commemorating his death in September 1915. My translations focus on the erotic nature of his love-poetry. By simplifying grammatical experiments, carefully choosing words and re-creating neologisms, and by shaping them in sound and rhythm, *YOU* aims to convey the “inner experience” captured in the poems, and transfer their “heart” to the listener. With these methods, Stramm’s writing can appeal to a broader international audience. His poetry remains alive and emotive to the

present, and radiates inspiration to find new expression for our times of change. As relevant as it was a century ago, it is time to raise Stramm's work into the universal canon of outstanding poetry.

## August Stramm – Inventor of Abstraction



*Img. 9: Stramm with his family in Berlin Karlshorst (1913). (Limes Verlag Wiesbaden)*

August Stramm was born in the Westphalian city of Münster, Germany on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1874. Aged 19 he began his career in the post office administration, advancing to an exciting position on the transatlantic Bremen/Hamburg – New York post-liner in 1897. He started writing just after the turn of the century, encouraged by his wife, writer and journalist Else Krafft, whom he married in 1902. With their two children, Inge and Helmuth, the family first lived in Bremen, moving to Berlin in 1905. Gaining his doctorate from the Royal Friedrich-Wilhelms-University with a dissertation on the *WELTEINHEITSPORTO*<sup>4</sup> in 1909,

Stramm went on to establish himself in prominent positions as Post-Inspector and eventually Captain for the military.

On the base of this security, he ventured into more daring fields of literature. So far he had lived up to society's expectations in the Empire of Wilhelm II. However, critical of "everything that was called art", as he wrote in a letter to his wife,<sup>5</sup> the respectable middle-class citizen August Stramm turned "early Expressionist". From 1909 in Berlin-Karlshorst he entered an intense writing phase, creating altogether ten plays, and over 70 poems until 1915. During this time he developed and experimented with new ideas of the use of language and dramatic elements. Even today,

his abstract, cosmic plays could provide excellent scripts for modern films. Poetry began to grip Stramm from around 1912. His daughter Inge notes in her 1956 collection of his poems, *DEIN LÄCHELN WEINT*:

*“With destructive force it had come over him [...], and more and more often he pulled out his notebook [...]. Each time he scribbled only a few words down, crossing out the previous ones. [...]. Poetry came over him like a disease [...].”<sup>6</sup>*

The search for new ways of literary expression brought him to discover his own concise lyrical style, and he began creating the first of his dense, short poems.

At the early dawn of the Expressionist movement the search for a publisher for his works proved difficult. The turning point for Stramm came when he was 40 years old. In 1914 he was introduced to one of Berlin’s most active promoters of the avant-garde arts scene, Herwarth Walden, and they became close friends. In the art-magazine *DER STURM*,<sup>7</sup> Walden was the first to publish Stramm’s plays and poetry. He brought him in contact with other Expressionist poets and artists of the *Sturm-Kreis*, who were thinking along similar lines. Among them were well known names like Paul Scheerbart, Arno Holz, Alfred Döblin, Kandinsky, Marc, Kokoschka, Rudolf Blümner, or William Wauer.<sup>8</sup> Widely connected in the international world, Walden printed and exhibited many influential artists in the magazine and his *Sturm-Gallery*, embracing various modernist movements.

Walden also introduced Stramm to the concepts of Futurism, which suggested creating new art-forms to express the dynamism and simultaneity of industrialised life. He had published the ‘*Futurist Manifesto*’<sup>9</sup> and ideas of ‘*Parole en Liberté*’<sup>10</sup> by the movement’s Italian founder F. T. Marinetti in the *STURM* magazine in 1912/13. Futurism embraces new technologies and intuitive methods, and dares writers to produce a dense, rebelling poetry, rid of all superfluous grammatical convention. Though Stramm never identified with the pro-war attitudes of Italian Futurism, and rather associated it with Walden’s ideas of ‘*Word-Art*’, he did take on the challenge of using language as a material.



When making poetry, August Stramm aimed to re-create an experience within a poem, rather than writing about it, with meaning, depth and effect in every single word and syllable. He stripped words from their grammatical class, distorted the syntax, coined neologisms, and focused on sound and rhythm to find the “single most suitable expression”<sup>11</sup> to portray an “inner experience”. His concise poems cast a flashlight into the reality of the world and meld their material into a new kind of expression. Stramm wanted his readers to feel the captured moments straight from the poems, and they indeed manage to achieve this. His writings came to represent the first examples of applied new theories which were already being explored in the practise of other art-forms across Europe. Just “like Kandinsky in painting, or Schönberg in Music, Stramm introduced abstraction into German poetry.”<sup>12</sup>

Then, in the midst of his literary rise, Stramm was called to active duty in August 1914. Through his time of service in WWI he continued writing “for the good of mankind”,<sup>13</sup> against all struggles in the trenches, and created his most intense poems. Posthumously collected by the *Sturm* as *TROPFBLUT. GEDICHTE AUS DEM KRIEG (POEMS FROM THE WAR)* in 1915,<sup>14</sup> they laconically and strikingly reflect the reality of war without glorification. Stramm did not have an enthusiastic pro-war attitude. He loyally fulfilled his duty to his country and those working under him. This bonded him with his soldiers, “his boys”, to protect them to his death. In a letter to Walden from the front (18<sup>th</sup> August 1915), Stramm writes:

*“When I came back to the company, I cried, and when I saw my boys, or rather didn’t see. [...] 25 men, all others dead and fallen and wounded. That hurts. [...]”*<sup>15</sup>

His friend and publisher even obtained permission to pull him out – just before his last battles, but Stramm refused. After two years of publishing, his military career abruptly ended his life: Battalion Commander Captain August Stramm fell on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 1915 at the eastern front, shot in the head after 70 battles as last man standing of his company, protecting “his boys” to the last drop.

## ‘DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE – YOU. LOVEPOEMS’

This commemoration edition of August Stramm intends to honour his poetic legacy and all too early passing with the translation of his love-poems. Of his two volumes of poetry, published by *Der Sturm* Verlag Berlin in 1915, his first is a collection of 31 love-poems called *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE*. Between 1917 and 1922, this book was re-printed in four further editions.<sup>16</sup> A facsimile re-print was published in Münster by Lothar Jordan in 1988.<sup>17</sup> Yet, the collection as such has not been launched in English before. In fact, Stramm’s war-poems from *TROPFBLUT* have been translated and debated more often than his love-poems.

Stramm wrote most of the intense, concise poems during spring and summer 1914. They were first published between June and December of the same year in various volumes of *DER STURM* magazine. Called to duty in August, the poet sent some of them to Walden directly from the trenches. When reading his love-poems in the book this background of impending and active war surfaces in many of them, influencing the various ways in which they can be interpreted. Stramm made the final selection for *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE* in January 1915 and entrusted the arrangement of the pieces to Herwarth Walden.

Upon receiving the finished book after days of heavy battles in the trenches near Chaulnes in Northern France he expressed his gratitude to his publisher in a letter from 14<sup>th</sup> February:

*“[...] Two nights ago I received the LOVEPOEMS [...]. Despite darkness, rain, thunder and crashing all around I had to open the packet, lying on my belly in a mud-hole so it would not get wet. And a stolen candlelight with it, that my boy had to shield with his body so it wouldn't become a target for the enemy with its shine. And then some coffee from the field-bottle poured over the fingers or finger-tips, so not to soil it too much. I believe only very few love-poems have been opened like this for the first time. [...] I am delighted. [...]”*

The poet ends the letter praising the careful arrangement by Walden: “Marvellous, wonderful! [...] So full of understanding and sense. [...]”.<sup>18</sup>

*YOU. LOVEPOEMS* is an exciting book for the lover of concise, intense, abstract poetry with a heart, written with craftsmanship and emotional depth. The thirty-one pieces in *YOU* range from eight (*Dis-paired*) to forty-six lines (*Love-Duel*), with only one or two words in many of them. In his condensed style, Stramm typifies basic human experiences of physical and spiritual love in a symbolic dualism of "I – You". He explores the theme of love in its various forms, facets and layers: Its ambiguity, its dualistic nature between living and dying, and its strife between sexual longings, fears and tensions of relationship, and the conventions of society. In form and content the poems rebel against rules and morals of the Wilhelmine era. Their tone is sensual and erotic, and they contain a cosmic-spiritual symbolism. *YOU. LOVEPOEMS* dares to express the eroticism of life itself, beautifully enveiled, full of poly-meanings and yet quite direct.

The "I" and "you" in Stramm's love-poems appear as bare pronouns without specific attributions, so the subject is not personal, and the addressed "you" does not refer to one defined individual. As Karin von Abrams identifies, "you" is not a "fixed entity".<sup>19</sup> It can represent a physical second person (*Ardour*, *Reunion*), an unspecified female counterpart (*Longing*), woman-kind (*Wooing*) or humanity in general (*Gloom*), as well as a plurality of "you"s (*Wavermind*). In some cases, the "you" is attributed with third person verbs (*Wonder*) or appears as an omnipotent divine cosmic entity (*Answered*). Thus the poems in the volume "extend beyond private romantic or erotic context" and "love [is] an essentially abstract relationship".<sup>20</sup>

Each poem provides a glimpse on a different facet or experience of love. They evoke specific situations, as well as expressing universal themes, creating an interesting tension between the abstract and the concrete.<sup>21</sup> Recorded are beautifully veiled or overt erotic moments (e.g. *Secrecy* or *Moonshine*), requited and unrequited love (e.g. *Blossom* or *Encounter*), and the "celebration of sexuality" and physical love (*Fulfilment*, *Urge*, *Play*). The reader is drawn into relationship conflicts (*Quarrel*) or promiscuity (*Rendezvous*, *Untrue*), is exposed to "debased sexuality" (*Pleasurehouse*),<sup>22</sup> experiences the "ultimate separateness of individuality" (*Recall*),<sup>23</sup> and witnesses love in the spiritual form of cosmic unity (*Evewalk*). In each of these glimpses or streams of emotion, the erotic

tension remains tangible between “you“ and “I“, between the “Wanting” (*Love-Duel*), which is physically and spiritually stronger than both, and on the other hand the expectations of society, restricting both from following that wanting (*Etiquette*).

Jeremy Adler has attentively examined the arrangement of the pieces in *YOU*.<sup>24</sup> The structure of the book is a cycle of poems, “motivated by attraction and repulsion”, which “is a governing idea in Stramm’s cosmology”. Their order is composed in two parts in groups of a “cyclical progression”. Adler sees two axes in the theme, the first spanning between separation and union in the joy and ecstasy of fulfilment, the second “spanning the basest and the noblest kinds of love”,<sup>25</sup> that is “the love of God in *Almight*”,<sup>26</sup> in which divinity is invoked. In the second part of *YOU* the recorded moments show a “change of attitude and a widening of experience”.<sup>27</sup> Mystifying the erotic element, the “I“ and “you” become “elevated into universal principles” (*Wonder*), striving to “unite in an abstract metaphysical sphere”<sup>28</sup> (*Gloaming*). The provided glimpses reveal an overall picture of love progressing from erotic excitement through struggles, errors and separateness towards cosmic unity. As the experience of these layers deepens the insight, love can open up to the universe and return to earth in the final pieces of the book. In its cyclical structure *YOU. LOVEPOEMS* is beautifully formed as a complete entity.<sup>29</sup>

As do all of Stramm’s writings, *YOU. LOVEPOEMS* expresses a reflection of his spirituality. His cosmic mysticism embraces a higher divine reality and recognises humankind’s unity with infinite life. This holistic faith in the eternal becoming and passing was shaped by his studies in Berlin (1906-09), where he attended lectures by the sociologist Georg Simmel, and read the works of Nietzsche. Here Stramm learned about the philosophy of Vitalism, which became popular through Henri Bergson at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This anti-rationalistic philosophy assumes a common metaphysical force flowing through all living being, and searches for the “inner essence of humanity and reality”.<sup>30</sup>

Stramm’s favourite books, *THE NONSENSE OF LIVING AND DYING* by Prentice Mulford,<sup>31</sup> and *IN TUNE WITH THE INFINITE* by Ralph Waldo Trine,<sup>32</sup> deeply shaped his views, having a profound influence on his poetry. Ultimately, his

faith supported Stramm even in the war. Trine's book accompanied him into death: a blood-stained copy was found in the chest-pocket of his uniform after he fell.

## **Expressionism and 'DER STURM'**

Expressionism was one of various international modernist trends critical of contemporary culture at the dawn of the twentieth century. Across Europe the art-movement was shaped by the historical era it flourished in. The years between 1900-1920 saw great changes in life and society with rapidly developing new technologies and communication media, political unrest and impending war, and a search for new spiritual orientation. The European avant-garde scene was interconnected throughout major cities and cultural centres such as Berlin, Paris, Milan, Zurich, Vienna and Prague, extending all over Eastern and Western Europe. In England and the US the early phase of Expressionism ran parallel with Imagism (1913) and Vorticism (1914).<sup>33</sup> In Europe the movement continued on to split up into Dadaism from 1916 and Surrealism from the 1920s. Many of its principles and objectives in visual arts and literature are similar to those of Cubism and Futurism.

Expressionism was well named. Across all art-forms artists were looking for different ways to express the new realities. Following the ideas of Kandinsky's *'On the Spiritual in Art'*,<sup>34</sup> they looked at the arts as autonomous, and saw them as a manifestation of the spiritual. In the "art of expression" abstraction became programme. Rather than depicting outer reality the artistic product resulted from an "inner experience", expressing the "essence of the universe" and the "rhythm of the cosmos", structured only by the artist's intuition and the "principle of inner necessity".<sup>35</sup> Art was intended as an emotional outreach to the recipient's soul, perceiving it not with reason and mind, but by experiencing it. Objecting to the imitating principle of Naturalism and Impressionism, the Expressionists went down to the basics, and focused on the material of their art.

The most lively centre of the avant-garde, specifically between 1910-20, was Berlin. Artists, playwrights, and poets gathered in the coffee-house



When Walden and his associates opened the *Sturm-Gallery* in 1912 they had a platform to promote the visual avant-garde in exhibitions and events, and began developing a theoretic programme for the arts. Uniting Cubist, Futurist and Expressionist ideas, the *Sturm* supported various trends across all art-forms. Many presentations in the gallery caused a storm of outrage by critics from the established press. This engagement led to a rapid internationalisation, by which the *Sturm* gained a central position for the European modernist movement. Exhibitions, lectures and 'Sturm Art-Nights' were held in major cities across the continent (see graphic). Walden as the organisation's leading figure, decided every step of the direction the *Sturm* would take. He kept in contact with friends and artists in Berlin, across Germany and Europe, and corresponded with Marinetti and Apollinaire for years.

### **Stramm and 'Sturm Word-Art'**

Modernist statements like Kandinsky's '*On the Spiritual in Art*', or Marinetti's '*Futurist Manifesto*',<sup>36</sup> printed in the magazine in 1912 and 1913, provided programmatic statements for all the arts. However, in its early phase, *Der Sturm* had not yet formulated its own poetic conception. This was about to change, when August Stramm and Herwarth Walden met in March 1914. For both their encounter was mutually fortunate and most



*Img. 11: Herwarth and Nell Walden in their home at Potsdamer Straße, Berlin. (ULB Münster)*

influential. Stramm had finally found a publisher for his dense experiments with language, and realised that he was not alone with his ideas. Walden had found a writer who could stand comparison with the *Sturm's* artistic theories and with international modernism in literature. The two developed a close friendship, extending far beyond their artistic fellowship.

Walden introduced Stramm to Kandinsky's theory and Arno Holz' ideas in '*Revolution of Poetry*,'<sup>37</sup> which are related to the Vorticist movement.<sup>38</sup> Italian Futurism gave the strongest impulse. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti had been in contact with Walden since 1911. His first manifestos in the *Sturm* were followed by the '*Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature*'<sup>39</sup> in autumn 1912, and later the '*Supplement to the Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature*.'<sup>40</sup> The concept of '*Parole in Libertá*', words in freedom, very much related to what Stramm had been looking for in his own writings. This encouragement spurred his productivity to the ultimate. His style matured to its radical condensation, soaking up and developing the inspiration of the new programmatic ideas. He created the plays '*Erwachen*' ('*Awakening*') and '*Kräfte*' ('*Forces*'), wrote two prose-pieces, a long poem '*Die Menschheit*', and most poems of the volume *DU*. In the second number of *DER STURM V* (April 1914), the first of Stramm's early poems appeared. In June and July his plays '*Sancta Susanna*' and '*Rudimentär*' followed in the first *Sturm-Books*, and '*Die Haidebraut*' ('*Bride of the Moor*') was launched in October 1914. Over 16 months almost every issue of *DER STURM* contained a play or some poems by Stramm.

When August Stramm entered the organisation the year 1914 saw the founding of the *Sturm-Kreis* with its own aesthetic guidelines. For this circle he became the poetic role model.<sup>41</sup> The relationship was equally inspiring for both: Just like the *Sturm's* ideas shaped Stramm's works, they in turn left his legacy in a new word-art, the '*Sturm Wort-Kunst*'.

The term '*Word-Art*' was coined by Arno Holz, whose poetic revolution was the first to free poetry from fixed metrical forms, allowing it to find its own form, and releasing it into the "inner necessity" of the spoken rhythm.



From this, the leading principle for *'Sturm Word-Art'* became Kandinsky's concept of the "inner experience",<sup>42</sup> which is a manifestation of vision and intuition, of stream of consciousness in the now. Released from its imitating function into abstraction, the autonomous language can unfold its own creative force. For Stramm, writing poetry is experiencing it.<sup>43</sup> The writer records his insight in an associative manner, making transcendental ideas 'visible' to the senses. Thus a poem can touch its audience's feelings, and allows them to emotionally re-experience it.

Breaking with literary and linguistic conventions, poetry, like other art-forms, needed to revise its material. Following Kandinsky's concept, Walden wrote: "The material of poetry is the word. The form of poetry is rhythm."<sup>44</sup> This novelty went beyond Holz, shifted the focus away from the norms of previous eras, and broke up the sentence. Now the word itself was set free. This is where Marinetti's postulations for Futurist literature enter Stramm's work and the theory of the *'Sturm Word-Art'*. In his *'Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature'*, Marinetti calls for the "destruction of the syntax" to free words from their grammatical ties. He suggests to "use verbs only in the infinitive form" to avoid a subjective perspective. By eliminating adjectives, adverbs, articles and conjunctions, Marinetti wants to declutter and dynamise language. Instead, he proposes to use "chains" and "webs" of nouns, creating ambiguous "analogies" throughout a text. Such methods rearrange the relations of space, time and object, and meld images into condensed absolute metaphors. Marinetti even suggests to replace punctuation by mathematical signs, typography to be used expressively, where a capital letter indicates a stronger emphasis than a small one,<sup>45</sup> the page to be read like a literary score, and orthography to be liberated, clearing the way for new word creations.<sup>46</sup>

This was the basis for Stramm to break and bend the language, taking it apart and putting it together anew. In his writing he picked up many of Marinetti's ideas. To make his poems as intense as life itself, they address all senses of his listeners and convey a host of meanings in their dense concentration. Yet, Stramm goes beyond the Futurist's demand of

destroying the syntax, using “accepted German linguistic procedures”.<sup>47</sup> Most prevalent are his infinitives used as nouns, which can be found in many lines and passages, and dominate the poems ‘*Quarrel*’ and ‘*Urge*’ completely. Independent from subject or object, they capture a state of action, a “process per se”,<sup>48</sup> which can be bigger than humanity, like in ‘*Love-Duel*’ or ‘*Answered*’. Stramm also changes word-classes from nouns to verbs or adjectives, or derives adjectives from verbs and vice versa. He often drops the reflexive pronoun and switches the transitivity of verbs, like in “Du stehst Mut” from the original of ‘*Almight*’. Word-classes are used in altered syntactical functions, and boundaries between them become blurred. These techniques occur numerous, also in reverse or in combination with others.

The word as the “smallest poetic unit” comes with its own structure. To create new words, the *Sturm* poets make use of the emotional, phonetic and rhythmic qualities of language. In this aspect Stramm’s search for the densest most fitting expression, the “single all-saying word”,<sup>49</sup> is at its most intense. He wants to revive every word-stem, every root and sound. His simplest technique for constructing neologisms, is making composites by joining the meaning of different words into a “complex of sensations” that can transport more than the sum of its parts.<sup>50</sup> The compounds, which can be very sensual in sound, bring nuances of emotional, visual, tactile, and acoustic impressions into a synthesis. Stramm’s technique of word-fusion goes even further, melding parts of words together. Syllables fuse their sounds, images, and meanings into intense synaesthetic expressions. They are often based on onomatopoeia, such as “graunen” in ‘*Moonshine*’, which mixes the colour grey with the verb “raunen” for “murmur”. Stramm’s handling of prefixes achieves further intensifying effects. He concentrates the sound on the word-stems by cutting off their prefix. For prefix-additions he prefers “ver-” [fər] with its soft fricative and its transitional sense, which creates a feeling of passing, as he writes in a letter to Walden.<sup>51</sup> The prefix “zer-” with its harsh hissing sound [tsər] and its destructive meaning, is explained for the neologism “schamzerpört” from ‘*Pleasurehouse*’ in the excerpt of Stramm’s letter to Walden printed with the poem above.<sup>52</sup>

'*Sturm Word-Art*' puts its focus on the sound of each word. As Kandinsky wrote in his concept: "The word is an inner sound".<sup>53</sup> This idea follows the "primal word theory" of Ernst Cassirer, who sees the origin of words in sound-imitation or emotional mono-syllabic expressions.<sup>54</sup> For Stramm sound has its own semantics, down to the smallest phonetic unit. Not only does he use onomatopoeic words, he assumes "primal sounds" at the base of language and applies these pre-word syllables in his creations. In "schamzerpört" even the minute sound-connection "pö" has a specific sense. His neologisms are the phonetic expression of a complex idea, the word becomes the "sound-image" of an experience. In Stramm's lines melodies of vowels and themes of consonants condense the web of meanings, and the sound-form of the whole poem becomes a many-layered ambiguous entity, completing its content. Equally, rhythm is essential for '*Sturm Word-Art*'. The grammatical and metrical structure of poetry is replaced by a rhythmical flow. According to Schreyer, the rhythm of the words forms "rhythmical units", uniting in the rhythmical unity of the whole text.<sup>55</sup> For Walden "each word has its intrinsic own movement", creating an inner motion of relations within a poem.<sup>56</sup> Stramm uses rhythm-figures, including the pause of line-breaks, to dynamically depict processes and structure his poems.

Contrary to Jeremy Adler's statement that Stramm is "sacrificing harmony and flow",<sup>57</sup> Stramm's poetry is written to be heard. He creates flow by the sound and rhythm of every word and line. And if "harmony" is viewed as the achievement to grip and touch an audience emotionally, his poetry truly provides this. Ultimately, in this focus, Stramm's '*Word-Art*' is addressed to a listening, dynamic audience. Its most important public form is the spoken word performance.

August Stramm was the first of Walden's closest friends to be drafted to war on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1914. Of all writers and artists called to duty at the front, his falling was the greatest loss for the *Sturm*. Stramm was not alive to see the first event of the '*Sturm-Kunst-Abende*' (1<sup>st</sup> September 1916) on the newly opened *Sturm-Bühne*, which offered a stage for drama, performances, and other events. It was held in his memory on the anniversary of his falling, where his poetry was performed for the first time.

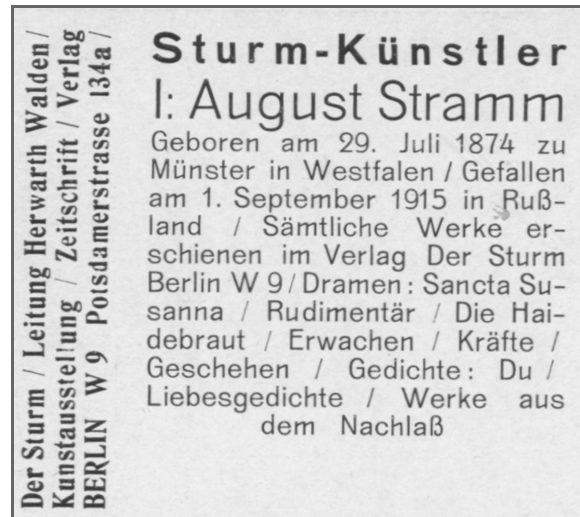
## Reception History

During Stramm's lifetime, public press and established critics had ridiculed his style, but posthumously he became an important player in the poetic world. The *Sturm-Kreis* and the Expressionist movement celebrated him as "the poetic genius of our time"<sup>58</sup> until the late 1920s. Stramm initiated a new tradition, as Alfred Döblin recognised:

*"No-one was of such advanced Expressionism in literature; he turned, sliced, drilled the language until it suited his needs."*<sup>59</sup>

Many writers began using his techniques, or examined them theoretically. Through 'Sturm Word-Art', Stramm's work went on to influence followers like Adolf Behne, Franz Richard Behrens, Kurt Heynicke, Hans Arp, Otto Nebel, Kurt Schwitters, and the *Sturm*-members Blümner and Schreyer. After the presentation of his poetry at the first 'Sturm Art-Night', Stramm's volume *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE* made it to five editions over the next six years.<sup>60</sup> His collection *TROPFBLUT* came out as a *Sturm-Book* in 1919. Stramm did not see the success of his three privately performed plays on the *Sturm-Bühne* between 1918-19. And though foreseen, he could not witness the public staging of 'Kräfte' (Berlin), or 'Die Haidebraut' and 'Erwachen' (Dresden) in 1921. In 1922 Paul Hindemith composed the one-act play 'Sancta Susanna' into an opera, which was performed until the end-1920s.<sup>61</sup> The year 1924 presented 'Rudimentär' (Berlin), 1928 saw 'Der Gatte' (Gotha), and 1929 'Die Bauern' (Oldenburg). Many of the plays were restaged after WWII in the 1970s and caused fierce criticism and controversy, just like the premières.<sup>62</sup>

Stramm's immediate posthumous success, however, was short-lived. Historical events in Germany nearly drowned out the trend of 'Sturm Word-Art'. Like many works of his Expressionist contemporaries, his writings were censored as "Degenerate Art" between 1933 and 1945. At



Img. 12: Back of the *STURM* postcard 1915. (ULB Münster)

least one of his plays, *Das Opfer*, was lost during the rise of the Nazis. As books were burning in public places of German cities on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1933, the reception of Stramm's work was swallowed by the Nazi abyss. His name would have been on the list of writers to be expatriated that year. When the archives of Stramm's family and Herwarth Walden in Berlin, and libraries across Germany were bombed in 1945, hundreds of letters, notebooks and copies of publications were destroyed.<sup>63</sup> Affected by suppression and damnation, the threat of censorship and expatriation, a whole era of arts-history was erased.

After WWII Stramm was rediscovered as a pioneer of Modernism. The first academic works appeared in 1950.<sup>64</sup> One year later, Arno Schmidt acknowledged:

*"Once I bowed my head [...] before August Stramm: the great poet."*<sup>65</sup>

At last, in 1952, Stramm's daughter Inge published an article<sup>66</sup> about her father, and launched a collection of his poetry in 1956.<sup>67</sup> Stramm was the first of many Expressionist writers to be revived. Since René Radrizzani brought out *DAS WERK* in 1963,<sup>68</sup> the most comprehensive basis for researchers to date, academic reflection picked up. However, Stramm's literary publicity was never really retrieved. This is not just due to the daring style of his works. In the early public perception of Expressionism itself, the most ground-breaking and progressive German voices were kept silent.

Yet, even with no direct Futurist or Expressionist influence, Stramm's techniques continued to inspire others, like Schwitters' *Merz-Poetry*, the experimental writing of Paul Celan, the Concrete Poetry of Ernst Jandl and Gerhard Rühm, or Günter Grass' and Peter Rühmkorf's poetic productions. In the 1970s the original *Sturm-Books* were re-printed in Liechtenstein for the centenary of Stramm's birthday.<sup>69</sup> In 1979 new source-material from his literary estate was made public.<sup>70</sup> Finally in 1990 a convention about Stramm was held in his birthplace Münster in Germany.<sup>71</sup> In the same year the most recent complete edition of Stramm's works, *DIE DICHTUNGEN* came out, along with his letters in *ALLES IST GEDICHT*, both edited by Jeremy Adler. Over the past 30 years Stramm's poetry spread to a broader German readership through academic teaching. Today, the publication trail about

his writings grows continually, including references in most monographies on modernist literature. Many new editions appeared since the millennium turn towards recent WWI commemorations, including BoD's, re-prints, digitalized versions, videos, and audio performances of his poetry and plays online.<sup>72</sup> New collections of his work were published by Michael Holzinger in 2013.<sup>73</sup> Stramm's literary estate is accessible at the University and State Library (ULB) Münster.<sup>74</sup> In 2015 his native city has finally decided to name a street after him. However, with all of his success, only a few of Stramm's poems made it into the German literary canon taught in secondary schools, and only his war-poems are taught in the curricula of other countries. The centenary of his falling provides a great occasion to bring Stramm's love-poetry to wider literary audiences across the world with fresh translations into English.

## Anglophone Translation History

It is remarkable that the first translations of August Stramm's works into English were launched in the same year as they appeared in Germany as *Sturm-Books* in 1914. While he was still alive, the plays '*Sancta Susanna*' and '*Bride of the Moor*' were printed in authorized translation by Edward J. O'Brien in *POET LORE – A MAGAZINE OF LETTERS*, Boston.<sup>75</sup> The magazine specialises in modern drama, and prides itself as a pioneer in introducing "the unknown geniuses of today" to the American public "the moment they appear".<sup>76</sup> Among the names of playwrights are many who subsequently became world-famous.

Stramm might have developed his own links to the anglophone world. His journeys on the Bremen/Hamburg–New York post-liner had brought him to the US in 1897/98. Apparently, he used longer stays for education and professional development.<sup>77</sup> However, most likely Herwarth Walden and the international connections of the *Sturm* facilitated these early translations. *POET LORE* acknowledges the courtesy and co-operation of the magazine.<sup>78</sup> Bridgwater notes: "Within the context of Anglo-American experiments in the years 1909-14, Stramm's work does not seem at all out of place."<sup>79</sup> Had he continued living, he could have become one of those world-famous playwrights of his time.

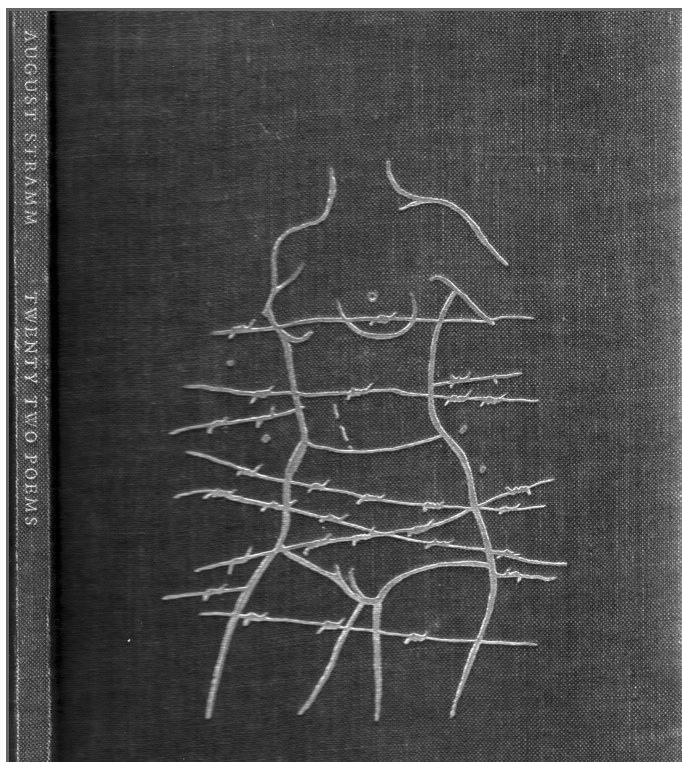
How Stramm's poetry and the theory of '*Sturm Word-Art*' came to Britain is another quest. Direct contacts of the organisation to England existed since a *Sturm* exhibiton of visual art in London 1914.<sup>80</sup> Disrupted by history, the attention shifted to France. Until WWI broke out, Guillaume Apollinaire was Walden's main corresponent for the *Sturm* in the modernist arts-scene of Paris.<sup>81</sup> He possessed each issue of the magazine, and was aware of Stramm's poems from the beginning. The *Sturm-Books* of the first plays were a gift by Walden in 1914. Through Apollinaire, the concept of '*Word-Art*' went on into Surrealism.

During WWI many writers and artists from Germany and other countries gathered in Paris. Among them was the American born Eugene Jolas, who was raised a multi-lingualist in Northern France. He lived in the US between 1909-22, and witnessed the print of Stramm's plays in *POET LORE* in 1914, and the obituaries by his translator, Edward O'Brien in Boston and Chicago in 1916.<sup>82</sup> From 1927 Jolas published the expat-magazine *TRANSITION*, which became a melting pot for the international avant-garde in Paris. Here writers like James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and Gertrude Stein of the anglophone circle assembled with Dadaist Hans Arp, the Expressionists René Schickele and Carl Einstein, or the Surrealists Bréton, Aragon and Yvan Goll. Schwitters, who kept in touch with Walden through the war, visited Paris in 1927, and was subsequently translated in the magazine. Its editions present names like Trakl, Ball, Tzara, Braque, Kafka, or Hart Crane, Ernest Hemingway and Carl Jung. From its third edition, *TRANSITION* began promoting a new era of poetry, directly referring back to the ideas of the *Sturm-Kreis* and August Stramm's writing. Its manifesto from 1929 proclaims the '*Revolution of the Word*', which reads very much like Expressionist programmes and the '*Sturm-Word-Art*' theory. Jolas hailed Stramm the most important poet of *DER STURM*, and printed his poem '*Verzweifelt*' as an example in German. Thus, the expat-magazine *TRANSITION* kept the movement of '*Word-Art*' alive throughout WWI and beyond.<sup>83</sup>

During WWII most *Sturm* artists went into exile. Walden left to Russia, his wife Nell to Switzerland. They took with them the '*Word-Art*' theory and their Expressionist ideas. With Nebel and Schwitters they went into Dadaism, and with that to Norway and England.<sup>84</sup> The roots of '*Sturm*

*Word-Art*, Futurism and Expressionism, found their way into the English-speaking world through Imagism and Vorticism, Dada, Surrealism and Constructivism, Concrete Poetry, Beat, Fluxus, and other avant-garde streams.<sup>85</sup>

The war-period left a huge gap in the translation history of Stramm's work. In the context of a world-wide resurrection of Expressionism and the modernist movement, Germanist studies about the *Sturm* internationalised broadly. Publications came out, not only in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, but also in Czechia, France, Poland, Sweden, Japan and the UK and US. Interestingly, it was often anglophone Germanists who recovered Stramm's traces.<sup>86</sup> The revival began with two essays by Christoph Hering in the US in 1959 and 1961.<sup>87</sup> One year later, Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton published the anthology of *MODERN GERMAN POETRY 1910-1960* in Britain, containing the first English translations of Stramm's poems: 'Begegnung/Encounter' and 'Schwermut/Melancholy' from *DU*, and 'Schlachtfeld/Battlefield' from *TROPFBLOT*.<sup>88</sup>



Img. 13: Cover-illustration by Rigby Graham, Bridgwater, *TWENTY TWO POEMS BY AUGUST STRAMM*. (Brewhouse Press, Wymondham 1969)

In 1963, coinciding with Radrizzani's edition *DAS WERK*, Patrick Bridgwater included four poems by Stramm with prose translations in his anthology *TWENTIETH CENTURY GERMAN VERSE*.<sup>89</sup> Subsequently, in 1969, he brought out a beautifully bound book *TWENTY TWO POEMS BY AUGUST STRAMM*, illustrated by Graham Rigby.<sup>90</sup> It contains eleven pieces from *DU* and *TROPFBLOT* respectively, of which eight each were unknown in English before.



Towards Stramm's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday activities picked up further. In Hull, C.R.B. Perkins wrote the first English dissertation on Stramm in 1972,<sup>91</sup> and Malcolm S. Jones published his research on the *Sturm* in 1974,<sup>92</sup> devoting a complete chapter to Stramm. Preceded by Jeremy Adler's appreciation of his works,<sup>93</sup> the Institute of Germanic Studies, University London, held an event with recitals by Walter Mehring and Gerhard Rühm as a centenary celebration. In the following year, new translations of 'Sancta Susanna' and 'Rudimentär' by Henry Marx appeared in New York.<sup>94</sup> Stramm's poetry translations were continued in 1976. In their anthology *GERMAN POETRY 1910-1975*, Carcanet Press Manchester included the pieces by Hamburger, plus his version of 'Frostfeuer/Frost Fire' from *TROPFBLUT*.<sup>95</sup> Perkins and Jones both promoted Stramm in further essays in 1976 and 77,<sup>96</sup> until Jeremy Adler and J.J. White (King's College London) published their important edition of new source material in 1979, containing three essays on Stramm in English.<sup>97</sup>

Consequently, in the 1980's, many new works appeared. Adler analysed the arrangement of *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE*, and Patrick Bridgwater focused on the war-poetry in 1980.<sup>98</sup> Karin von Abrahms' study on the "Du" in Stramm's love-poems in 1982 contributed further impulses in English,<sup>99</sup> while Bridgwater included him in another anthology in 1985.<sup>100</sup> In the same year, a re-translation of 'Sancta Susanna' by Olivia Fuchs was presented in a closed première at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Only three years after this, the excellent translations of Stramm's poems by Jeremy Adler, a major contributor to his reception in Germany and abroad, were published in Tim Cross' anthology, *THE LOST VOICES OF WORLD WAR I*.<sup>101</sup> They illustrate Adler's expert insight and knowledge of Stramm's work. Quite in contrast are Isham Cook's versions, *AUGUST STRAMM. SELECTED POEMS*, also issued in 1988.<sup>102</sup> Available online, the edition contains some of the early poems, all pieces from *DU*, and twenty from *TROPFBLUT*. Cook's versions focus on Stramm's form and imagery, but neglect his rhythm and sound, and rarely succeed in transmitting the "inner experience".

In 1990 Adler's edition *DIE DICHTUNGEN*, and the letters in *ALLES IST GEDICHT* had an igniting impact on research about Stramm. The publication trail intensifies in the decade towards the millennium turn. However, a long time passes before the next anglophone translation of his poetry appears.

Anthony Vivis and Will Stone worked on their version of the volume *TROPFBLUT* for some time. In 2003, a few of the poems were published in an anthology by Tate Gallery London.<sup>103</sup> Printed in a limited edition by Taw Press in 2007, the book presents a selection of fourteen poems from the war, including *'The Ride'*, enhanced with paintings by Otto Dix. Vivis and Stone deliver Stramm's war experiences with depth and quality.<sup>104</sup> Subsequently, in 2012, the *BLACK HERALD* Literary Magazine in Paris included four of their pieces alongside French versions by Elisabeth Willenz.<sup>105</sup> Alistair Noon contributed more recent poetry translations in 2009.<sup>106</sup> His volume contains twelve pieces from *TROPFBLUT*, which he rightly calls "versions".<sup>107</sup> They attempt to transfer the poems into present war situations. By focussing on imagery, Stramm's formal, acoustic, and rhythmic achievements are altered in a manner of free imitation far removed from the Expressionist context. Nine of Noon's versions appeared online in the *CIPHER JOURNAL*.<sup>108</sup> In an internet-search on Stramm *'The PIP (Project for Innovative Poetry) Blog'*<sup>109</sup> presents the newest translations. Three poems from *TROPFBLUT*, the pieces *'Schwermut'* and *'Wunder'* from *DU*, as well as *'Urtod'* were contributed in English in 2011 by the Canadian Marcel Hryciuk. He tries making the poems easier to read by adding grammatical elements, and adapts them to the lingo of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in replacing "you" with "U". Yet, occasionally, he lacks understanding of Stramm's originals. Without exposing the translators, other examples in varying quality can be found online. In all searches, it becomes evident that Stramm's collection *TROPFBLUT* has been explored much more than *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE*. This volume aims to fill that gap.

## **Links to Ireland**

To cast a bridge from August Stramm to the literature of Ireland, connections with Irish writers can be traced. Jeremy Adler's claim that "James Joyce did on a grand scale for English, what Stramm achieved more modestly for German",<sup>110</sup> links back to the magazine *TRANSITION* in Paris. Jolas published Joyce, and the Surrealists Samuel Beckett and Thomas MacGreevy. In his essay from 1928, *'The Revolution of Language and James Joyce'*, Jolas makes a direct connection, pointing out how August Stramm paved the way for

“verbal deformations”.<sup>111</sup> His name and work were familiar to the Irish modernist writers who published in the magazine. Although there is no direct line between ‘*Word-Art*’ and avant-garde writing in Ireland, Stramm’s influence on Irish literature is bound to have come indirectly, through Joyce and the ‘*Revolution of the Word*’ initiated by *TRANSITION*.

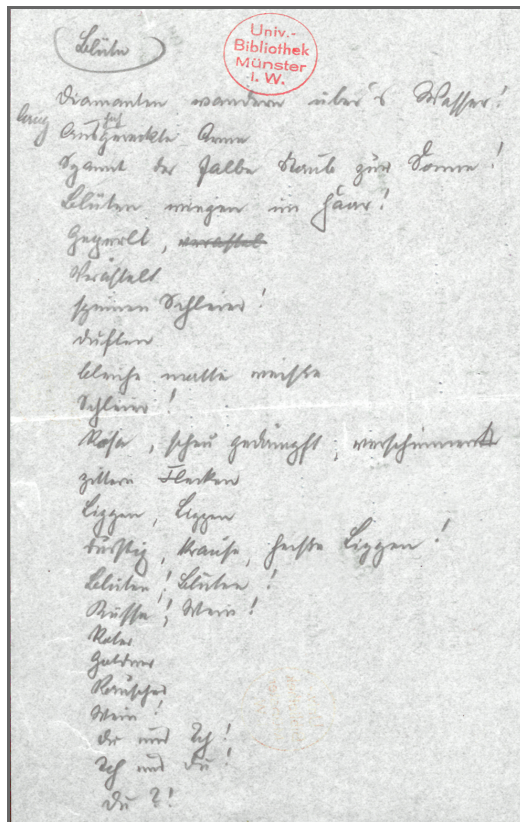
Both Bridgwater and Adler further relate Stramm’s style to Imagism, which follows similar ideas to ‘*Word-Art*’. The Imagists gathered in London around poet Ezra Pound, with members from the UK, Ireland and the US. Pound, who was close to James Joyce, later co-founded the Vorticist movement, which integrates some Futurist artistic methods. Briefly at the centre of this circle was Belfast-born Joseph Campbell. The ideas of Futurism would have influenced the Irish avant-garde through the manifestos of Vorticism and Imagism.

Although Alex Davis claims that the European avant-garde had very little impact on the poetry of Ireland in the early twentieth century,<sup>112</sup> maybe unnoticed August Stramm and the ideas of ‘*Word-Art*’ did leave traces in the works of Joyce, Beckett or MacGreevy. They in turn inspired other Irish avant-gardists in Paris in the 1930s, like Brian Coffey or Denis Devlin. Both turned to unconventional syntax or Concrete Poetry in their later years, bringing the influence home. This inspiration extends to the new trend of the 1960s, which Davis refers to in his article ‘*Deferred Action. Irish Neo-Avant-Garde Poetry*’.<sup>113</sup> Writers like Michael Smith, Trevor Joyce, Maurice Scully, Catherine Walsh, or Randolph Healy, who founded the avant-garde publishers ‘*New Writers Press*’ (1967), ‘*hardPressed Poetry*’ (1985) and ‘*Wild Honey Press*’ (1997), are clearly familiar with early experimental poetics. However, they work from a general modernist matrix.

In 1996 an international poetry conference, ‘*Assembling Alternatives*’ at the University of New Hampshire, initiated the founding of the ‘*SoundEye*’ festival in Cork.<sup>114</sup> The city became a centre of Irish avant-garde energies. Co-founded by Trevor Joyce, the ‘*festival for new and experimental art forms*’ has been held annually since. Bringing an array of innovative poets to Cork, figures like Geoffrey Squires, Tom Raworth, Matthew Geden, Keith Tuma, and Tony Frazer have all been involved. With new generations helping in the organisation, the old guard of the Irish “Neo-Avant-Garde” passed the baton to Fergal Gaynor, James Cummins and Rachel Warriner,

and even from there, it is wandering on. Due to these activities, alternative and experimental poetry has been much more visible in Ireland a decade into the twenty-first century than it was at the century's turn. Since activities peaked during and after Cork's year as European Capital of Culture in 2005, many of the publishers and magazines of experimental poetry have slowed down or ceased because of the economic crisis. Among them are the three avant-garde presses mentioned above. But the scene is still alive, and the movement continues not only in the 19<sup>th</sup> 'SoundEye' festival, but also in the first 'Skerries International Avant-Garde Poetry Festival "The Donkey Shots"', held in County Dublin in 2015.

Maybe in this context, bringing August Stramm's *YOU. LOVEPOEMS* to Ireland can inspire many writers, performers and listeners, even beyond the avant-garde. When searching for aspects of a vibrant and critical "movement" it might be worth looking to the growing Irish spoken-word scene. This book aims to open Stramm's love-poems to a world-wide audience. His poetry is as relevant to date as it was 100 years ago, and deserves to be raised to international prominence.



Img. 14: Original manuscript of 'Blüte' ('Blossom'). (ULB Münster)

# Translating the Inner Experience

## Translator's Comment

Translating Stramm is a journey into the depth of language. Every syllable, every sound, every word and image are soaked with meaning. I have always admired Stramm's poetry not only for its condensed abstraction, but for its "goosebump-moments", the moments in a poem that touch us deepest, their "heart". These can be found within just a few words or lines, usually intense and laden with ambiguity, word-play and dense metaphors, which express a core statement or capture an image in the perfect way. The translation process of any poem clearly reveals these hearts, because they can be hardest to transmit. They easily get lost in translation and pose a special challenge.

Examples are abundant in *You*. Feel the devotion in the centre part of *'Ardour'*: "In your pace sizzles / away / my reason / and / in your eyeground / dies / my last will!", or the emptiness at the end of *'Reunion'*: "Time is wooing space!". Savour the central image of *'Play'*: "The chain bursts! / Your body rears up high!"; laugh at the feeling of "dopey dither founders forth" ending the poem *'Encounter'*, or let the final line of *'Moonshine'* melt in your mouth: "Feeling moans into my hand." Often, the hearts are revealed in the last six lines, like in the poems *'Urge'*, *'Gloom'* or *'Passing'*. Many pieces are completely taken over by such goosebump-lines, making it impossible to single any one out.

Existing translations of Stramm's poetry reflect his use of language as a material. The academic world has re-iterated this focus on grammatical condensation and formal experiments, and has coined the term "telegram-style" in literature about him. This is often associated with an abrupt staccato rhythm and the sacrifice of flow. Yet, each piece of poetry Stramm created is a true "inner experience" and deserves to be translated as such. At the heart of his intentions lies the aim of re-creating a moment or process flowing through us. His hope was to capture the "inner experience" in such a way that the reader or listener can feel it. As in most poetry, this comes out by hearing the piece, allowing it to sound out its message, not only by thinking it through. In their emphasis on Stramm's grammatical achievements, many translations have **forgotten the hearts** of these poems, and have lost their most intense "goosebump-moments". I prize Jeremy Adler's versions,<sup>115</sup>

which excellently capture both elements. Often I agree with his choices and rather reluctantly decide to differ.

As a native German speaker translating Stramm poses a real challenge. My advantage is knowing his work process, his ways of, and reasons for forming words and expressions. This includes poly-meanings and abstractions which are not easy to re-create in English. While staying as true as possible to the originals in content and form, my simplification of Stramm's grammatical experiments might help to decrypt his dense poetry. The translations in this book strive to bring out his delicate and sensual love-poems in their erotic nature by choice of wording, and by transferring the "inner experience" in sound and rhythm. My aim is to recover the "hearts" and bring their life back into the translations. My motivation is the challenge of bending the English language to the extreme expressive needs of Stramm's poetry.

**In general**, my translations use the same grammatical techniques and methods as Stramm for condensing the content of the originals into concise poems. Though often melded into existing words, I employ word-class changes, compounds, word-fusion, and prefix-constructions where possible. Beyond such neologisms, orthography differs, where the dash between composite parts of a word is eliminated, like in German. Examples are the book-title *LOVEPOEMS*, or the poem headers '*Pleasurehouse*', '*Wavermind*' and '*Evewak*'. Other directly linked compounds include "boilstream", "eyeground", "heartblood", "gownfringe", or "motherwombs". Only where the English would be hard to decipher a dash is applied. With the idea of expressive typography I cannot resist capitalising some nouns, to indicate a higher importance, such as "You", "Kiss", "Earth", "Sky", "Death", "Heaven", "Devil", "God", or "World". Further capitals intend to distinguish nouns from infinitives, like "the Breathing, Blowing, Howling" or "Storming" in '*Answered*'. Mainly, capitalisation is used to help identify grammatical units. The punctuation strictly follows Stramm's originals in their Futurist reduction to full stops, exclamation marks and the odd question mark.

With its much simpler grammar English does not allow for too much play with form. Instead, where German can continually construct new words from existing linguistic parts, the English language offers an array of words to choose from.

The **translation process** is much like Stramm's own writing process, as witnessed by his daughter Inge. From the raw translation as the base of the new version, I cast out a net of words, exploring the different nuances of meaning in the originals. This word-net extends and expands, will be scrutinized and checked, previous choices are crossed out, new ones appear. Reeling it in gradually, I select the best representatives for connotations, as well as for sound and rhythm, which deeply shape the sense of Stramm's words. The process is comparable to braiding the lines into a plait. Often English falls into place by altering or accepting to drop a few nuances. If no existing word can fill a meaning, I make up new ones, like Stramm did. The decisions are a matter of choice and feeling. They are guided by the general theme of the volume *You*, the content and particular tone of each poem, whether earthly, erotic or spiritual, and by the sensual quality and viscosity of the specific expressions. Their interplay within the respective lines and those immediately around them is matched with the context of the original piece.

At each stage, going back to the "drawing board" that is my reading-stand, is essential. This allows me to hear the words in context and feel the flow of the whole poem. In the creation process of the English version different nuances and connotations emerge and add a new layer to the web of meanings. The translation can help to decode the poem's implications, and sometimes creates a "new heart" by making new interconnections within the piece. Thereby, each process has brought me to a deeper level of understanding Stramm's poetry. Finally, the translation is knitted together by rhythm, and ultimately overall sound. This is where I hope to differ most from other translators. Tightening up the strings of the newly woven web brings out a new 'sound-system', which captures the feel of the complete piece, and can transport the emotion of the "inner experience".

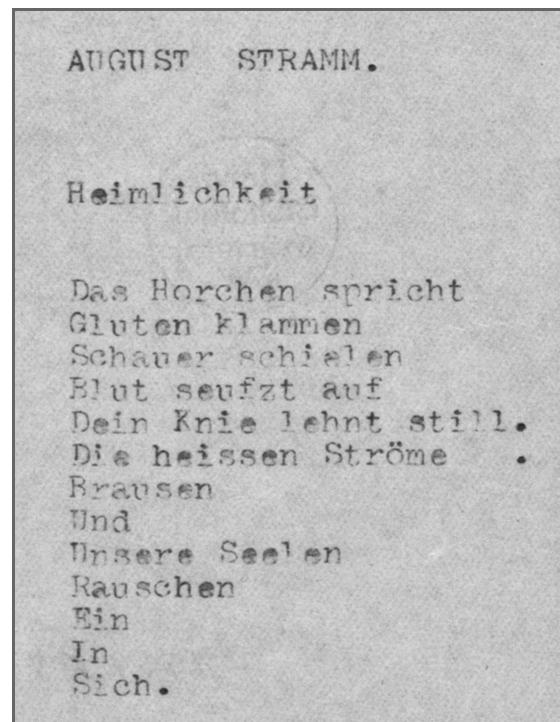
In Stramm's poetry, **special challenges** occur along the way. Basic grammatical forms in German, like "Dir" or "Dich", can be very difficult to transfer. English does not differ between subject or object in the pronoun "you", yet Stramm differentiates by using these forms. Depending on context, I resort to prepositions, such as "at", with a sense of 'against', in *Love-Duel* and *Curse*. The poem *Recall* uses "for You",

and *Wavermind* ends with “You / For you / I !” which *Urge* reverses. This technique needs a verb in its vicinity, like “pave”, “search” or “melt”, to which the preposition can logically link.

Another difficulty lies with reflexive verbs or the pronoun “sich”, which points back to a singular or plural subject. Naturalizing these within the English version means to step back and see the intention in context, to come to a grammatically swift solution. *Gloaming* uses a direct translation for the plural subject. *Love-Duel* requires a different decision, as “sich beugen” in the line “Und beugen sich”, is a reflexive verb, meaning “to defer to s.o.”. To keep the image of “bowing”, the connotation of “giving way”, and the rhythm of the line, I chose “and bowing way”. The poems *Pleasurehouse* and *Ardour* need a grammatical rearrangement of the lines containing “sich”. *Ardour* presents the verb “kränzen”, meaning “to garland” in its last six lines. The English version would not flow with a direct translation of “sich” to “oneself”. Instead, the self-reflection is expressed in a possessive adjective, regrouping the lines to: “Cool / your flirt curls / into its own / hair / smiling / my ordeal!”

In the case of *Secrecy*, the translation of the reflexive pronoun can lead to a very different understanding of the whole poem. Jeremy Adler sees the lovers in the piece reunite in the sexual act, ending “ambiguously with a suggestion of separation-in-union”.<sup>116</sup>

This interpretation hinges on perceiving “sich” as the self-reflexive pronoun “themselves”, leading him to translate “And / Our souls / Rush / In / To / Each”. However, due to the ambiguity in Stramm’s language, it is possible to read the poem as an expression of complete unity, when understanding “in sich” as “into one-another”. In my translation “and / our souls / swirl / in / to / one”, the inner experience of a secret erotic moment between the lovers flows into a quiet, perfect union.



Img. 15: Early typescript of *Heimlichkeit* (ULB Münster).



A different challenge is posed in Stramm's expression of **cosmic ideas**. As a spiritual thinker not bound within Catholicism, his deep connection with the universe and its divinity has left traces in how he views the world and chooses his words. Beyond the many neologisms, rarely directly translatable, he uses untranslatable concepts that encompass big existential ideas. Here I realise most that I am not a native English speaker. Examples start from the simple German word "das All" in *'Wonder'*, or the common verb "siegen" in the last line of *'Almight'*, where a direct translation can fall short of the all-embracing spiritual connotation in the original. Where Adler translates "Du siegst Gott!" straightforwardly to "You triumph God!",<sup>117</sup> I slightly soften the line to "You reign God!". The expression "Allwege Du", in the piece *'Wavermind'*, has a religious nuance. Made from the adjective "allerwegs", Stramm's neologism refers to an omnipresence beyond the meaning of "on all ways". The Greek prefix "omni-" helped merging the temporal and spacial implications into "Omniways You". Relatively easily translatable to "inexistence" is the word "das Nichtsein" (the nonbeing) in *'Answered'*, although its vitalist idea is sacrificed for a rationalist aspect in the English version. Stramm's extreme neologism "Wahnichtig" in the poem *'Longing'* forces the triviality of human existence from "nichtig", to meld with its insanity ("Wahnsinn"), coming to the translation "Crazevoid / selfs!"

The ultimate untranslatable concept in *You*, is the noun "Unermesslichkeit" in the poem *'Gloaming'*. Its idea embraces far more than mathematical "immeasurability", it reaches into the divine. To grasp this aspect, Cook uses "immensity" or "immenseness";<sup>118</sup> the words 'vastness' or 'infinity' also come to mind. Choices are determined by how a translator interprets the poem, which oscillates strongly in its implications. Adler reads it as a "joyous, [...] even ecstatic" piece, which "celebrate[s], how [the speaker] attains infinity through 'you'" in its last part.<sup>119</sup> Consequently he translates "Boundlessness".<sup>120</sup> I read a dreamlike state between sleep and waking, where no awareness of separateness exists. From this blissful unity, the dreamer is stirred by the light, and loses the "You" in the vastness of reality. Striving against that loss, he wakes to the loneliness of his day. In the end, the vastness rips the dreamer into the separateness of "me" and "you". Consequently, my choice "Unboundedness" aims to reflect both,

infinity and the lack of connectedness. Though Adler's version differs in many aspects according to how he reads the poem, his translation for the concept of "Unermesslichkeit" might still be the best.

The freedom of poetry translation allows the choice of **different solutions** for the same word. Not always is the same connotation intended, not always the same sound or syllable-count required. A word can depict an image or movement, and an emotion or action. Some words and their derivatives do not have a single direct translation, like "schweigen", "winden", "schmiegen", or the old verbs "zagen" or "kosen". Expressions deriving from onomatopoeic imitation pose a particular challenge. The lone verb "zischt" in "Flame zoshes the brain" of *'Fulfilment'*, resolves in a comic-derived invention. The infinitive "brausen", used as a noun in the poems *'Play'* and *'Answered'*, is translated to "Gush" and "the Howling" respectively. Occurring together in *'Secrecy'*, "rauschen" and "brausen" are transferred to movement in "swirl" and "surge".

Words of movement are also the recurrent verbs "(sich) wehren" and "(sich) sträuben", which Stramm uses without their reflexive pronoun. Often in the same text, both are close in their meaning "to defend" or "fight off". Depending on the sound-context of the lines, they appear in various translations, like "forgoes" (*'Wooing'*) and "wards" (*'Gloaming'*). Almost interchangeably, the poem *'Curse'* presents them in its opening line "You writhe and struggle". In *'Quarrel'*, the translation "wrestles" depicts the fighting action of "Schmiegen wehret", while "bristles" reflects the visual quality of "Armen sträubet". The piece *'Urge'* uses the verbs in sequence: "Schrecken Sträuben / Wehren Ringen". Here the English keeps the meaning of "striving against", shows the "writhing" motion of a struggle, and makes space for the direct translation "wrestling" for "ringen".

Emotional connotations play another essential role for the choice of expressions in *You*. Applied in eight poems, the verb "beben" represents various nuances. *'Rendezvous'* and *'Fulfilment'* use the translation "quiver" to capture erotic excitement. The solution "quake" displays mighty tremors in *'Answered'*, while transporting fear in *'Quarrel'*. The same factor is depicted in the verb "trembles" in *'Longing'*, while it transmits insecurity in

*'Reunion'*. Expressing a cosmic sense in *'Gloaming'*, and an erotic one in *'Play'*, the version "pulsing" mirrors the softest nuance of the word. One of Stramm's favourite verbs in *You* is "reißen". It appears in seven poems, and is interpreted differently in each one. *'Love-Duel'* uses the line "and rips the walls down", *'Moongaze'* presents "[t]ears after it the Sky", *'Answered'* cites "and razes time to aeons", the piece *'Dream'* lets "fabrics fissure", and *'Encounter'* says "yanks the heart". *'Gloaming'* is the only poem with the prefix-verb "zerreißt"; its violence is reflected as "severs". Finally, "the chain bursts" in *'Play'* expresses the pivotal moment of erotic engagement. For each word, line and poem, my decisions are based on context, rhythm and sound.

A variation of the poetic freedom of choice occurs, where the same word is repeated in a text or line. In such cases, I can bring out **different nuances** of meaning that might otherwise get lost. This happens in the poem *'Gloaming'*, with the connotations of "(outer) space" and "rooms" for the singular and plural of "Raum". In *'EveWalk'*, the noun "Schatten" appears as "shadow" and "silhouettes", depicting a clear image and melding into the sound of surrounding words. *'Encounter'* interprets the duplicated German verb "wiegst" as "You sway and weigh" to express movement and weight. The line "You blinks the eye" in *'Wonder'* uses two different words instead of "look", to suit the sound-context, where Stramm stays within the family of "Blick". In the poem *'Secrecy'*, the passage "The sizzling streams / surge / hot / to ocean" avoids a simple repeat of the direct translation "hot" for the adjective "heiß", which would break the rhythmic and melodic flow and dismiss the erotic excitement of the original.

In many places, Stramm repeats a word in direct sequence, where the varied interpretation becomes more obvious. The lines of the poem *'Play'*, "Through lamp-light's glimmer sink your eyes / and drink me / and / slurping gulping", do not follow his triple repetition of the verb "schlürfen". In English, "slurping" refers to sound, so it dismisses the avid 'drinking in big draughts' that the German reflects. I reintroduce these nuances, using three different verbs. Similarly, *'Wooing'* translates the archaic verb "harren" (to abide/wait for) into the sequence "halting / hoping", and consequently to "My hoping halts".

In the case of *Wavermind*, I completely drop Stramm's play with word-families, which is a standard technique of the German language. My version of the passage "Wirr / Wirren / Wirrer / Immer wirrer / Durch / Die Wirrnis" gives preference to the various nuances behind the words. The adjective "wirr" is not directly translatable. Its main meaning 'confused' does not allow for creating a family from the stem. "Wirr" also means 'bewildered', 'tangled', 'crazy', and 'chaotic', while the verb "wirren" contains a motion of 'straying' and 'swirling', and the noun "Wirrnis" can refer to the turmoil of war. Where Cook makes the word-family from "crazy",<sup>121</sup> Bridgwater creates it from the stem "maze" and comes to the neologism "mazement" for the noun.<sup>122</sup> To keep the variety of connotations and yet follow the w-alliteration, I translate the passage as "Wildered / whirling / weirder / ever more whorled / through / the turmoil". In the hope that the sound transports enough of Stramm's formal play, this solution is an attempt at making the poem more transparent in its nuances.

Translating Stramm's poetry confronts any translator with the challenge of his **distorted grammar**. The ideas of *Sturm Word-Art* and Futurist techniques are pictured in every piece of the volume *You*. Especially his infinitives and word-class-changes liquefy the conventional German syntax. I mirror these means wherever possible, bending the language and crafting neologisms where necessary. However, the translation often falls into place by choice of words, many of which are available in various classes. Stramm's experimental grammar drowns in the simplicity of the English, and the form-play can disappear. To my advantage, resorting to an easier grammatical form helps to convey the "inner experience", and to transfer the flow and the "hearts" of the poems.

This is my motivation for translating Stramm's many **infinitives** with the continuous form, rather than reducing them to the word-stem. Free from grammatical subject or object, the German infinitive displays an ongoing process in its own right, which can flow directly through the reader. The continuous captures this process in the moment of happening, and is closest to Stramm's intention of writing from "the now". For him each

infinitive is a process, and so is each line, rhythmical unit, and the whole poem. The pieces *'Quarrel'* and *'Urge'* need to be read with this in mind. Many other poems in *You*, such as *'Love-Duel'*, *'Answered'*, *'Fulfilment'*, *'Almight'*, and *'Uncertain'*, contain passages of infinitives in sequence. The English continuous form also allows for keeping the rhythm to mirror the flow of the pieces and avoid the staccato effect of bare one-syllabic word-stems. Where it is not applied, my decision for going back to the English infinitive form can be based on grammar or rhythm.

In *'Quarrel'*, the infinitive-lines are grouped in couplets, rounded by an up-beat single syllable. Translated to the continuous form, the second line closes with the word "hate" from the noun "Hass". The fourth ends on the neologism "fraid", created to parallel the German one-syllabic adjective "bang" for 'afraid'. Line six sticks to the same rhythmic pattern, finishing with the abbreviated infinitive "gehn". To keep the rhythmical unit intact, I chose the English infinitive form "leave" instead of the continuous. A similar decision applies in the poem *'Gorgeous'*, where the need for an up-beat verse-ending led to the solution "dying be" for "Sterben Sein". In the case of *'Gloaming'*, the third person plural verbs in the passage "My limbs / swinging sinking sinking drowning" are translated into the continuous to keep the rhythm complete.

Grammatical reasons for different transfers of infinitives underlie in the case of *'Recall'*. The passage beginning with "All the woely faded wishes", provides the subjects for the verbs "storming storming / arching forging", which are originally third person plural. To keep the process flowing, they are translated as continuous, until the line "move and pave" switches back to the personal form. Followed by "for you / the way", the change allows bonding the grammatical unit. Equally, the poem *'Play'* grammatically closes the sentence of its opening section "Your fingers purl", with a return to the third person plural in the line "surge around me", embracing two lines of independent processes, that are translated as continuous verbs.

Stramm's infinitives not only define a process or a third person plural verb, they often represent a word-class change from verb to noun. Infinitives used as nouns can be found by a direct article or possessive pronoun, like in the line "My searching seeks" in *'Wavermind'*, and by the occasional

capitalisation. “The Wanting”, “the Spying”, “the Coming”, “the Listening”, and the group of nouns in *‘Answered’* are subjects of an action, translated from infinitives, and represent powers outside a human individual.

Stramm’s other **word-class changes** go further in distorting the German syntax. However, they can be more apparent in the originals than in their English versions. It is not always possible to re-create the grammatical neologisms, and only a few places allow for an exact application of Stramm’s techniques. Many of my translations dissolve them into existing words or forms, although in some places the transition is successful.

Nouns turn into verbs, like in the line “Budlets rozen up and steeple promise” in *‘Fulfilment’*. Here the first verb stems from the noun ‘rose’, and the second, “steilen”, from the adjective for “steep”. The translation makes both from a noun. In the opening of *‘Pleasurehouse’*, “Lights wanton from the windows”, the famous verb “dirnen” from the noun for “whore” disappears in an existing verb, while further down a successful derivation is made in “sprites” for “geistet”. Similarly, in the posthumous poem *‘Churchwalk’*, two of three verbs created from nouns dissolve in common translations to the continuous form, while a direct transfer of the technique was possible in the line “The steeple sundays”. Further smooth exchanges are achieved in “You souls the mind” from *‘Wonder’*, or the expression “I / stone” from *‘Dis-paired’*. The end of the poem *‘Longing’* translates the unusual verb “icht”, derived from the pronoun “ich” as “selfs”. Generally not transmittable is the frequent verb “bogen” in *‘Wonder’*, *‘Almight’*, *‘Wooing’* and *‘Recall’*, which is made from the noun for “arc” or “arch” and results in a common verb in English.

When creating verbs from adjectives, Stramm turns a property into an action. Again, most of his examples dissolve in the transfer to existing words, such as “mute” for the mighty verb “stummen” in *‘Gloom’*. The method remains most prevalent in the poem *‘Moongaze’*. Its lines “Yellows high up / and / sultries me! / Languid / pales the bed”, and later “blues the hand”, make all their verbs from adjectives. Stramm’s creations formed the other way around, survive in simple solutions, like “shimmery” or “quivery” (*‘Fulfilment’*), and “dangly” (*‘Untrue’*). The expression “rauscher Wein” from the poem *‘Blossom’*, dissolves the adjective into “rousing”.

Equally, most word-class changes of nouns to adjectives disappear in translation. A successful transition remains in “vapourly” from *Freudenhaus*, for “dünstelnd” from “Dunst”. The poem *Moonshine* uses my own word-fusion “tipped” (tip+nipped), to reflect the adjective “zitzen” from the noun meaning ‘teat’. In *Recall*, “woe” creates the adverb “woely” for “weh”, which is unusual only in English.

One of my favourites of the volume *You*, the poem *Evewalk*, uses many word-class changes. Its opening line, “Through nestle night” successfully applies Stramm’s technique and makes the adjective from an English verb, where the original comes from “schmiegen” (to cuddle up). In the third line, the adjective from the noun for “cramp” dissolves in the translation “clenching terror”. The same happens in “Sleepy Earth embraces naked Sky”, where the German “schlafe” derives from the noun for “sleep”, and the prefix-subtraction “armt” is translated directly. Although I mimic Stramm’s techniques where possible, my focus on conveying the “inner experience” to the reader causes the simplification of his play with grammar.

For the creative translator, Stramm’s further **neologisms** provide plenty of space to play. Here his focus on sound for smithing each word is most evident, down to the syllable. The influence of Cassirer’s “primal sounds”, Kandinsky’s idea of the “word as an inner sound”, and Vaihinger’s “complex of sensations”, is apparent in the smallest phonetic unit. This is difficult to re-create, and tends to get lost or replaced by a new sound-system in the English version.

Stramm predominantly joins existing words into one composite expression. I translate his **compounds** as directly as possible, occasionally connected with a dash, like “cheeky-splayed” or “cheat-angled” in *Rendezvous*. While the exact transfer of the first adjective “frechgespreizt” needs no explanation, my version of the second, “tügeneckend”, reflects the sense of “cheating” in Stramm’s image of a ‘backstreet corner’ (“tügerische Ecke”). Further simple composites with direct translations appear in *Pleasurehouse* and *Ardour*. For the poem *Untrue*, Stramm describes forming the word “Laubwelk” as an attempt to convey smell and breath through its liquid sounds.<sup>123</sup> “Laub” depicts ‘fallen leaves’ in a one-syllabic singular noun. While imitating the sound of the German, my translation

“leaves-whither” remains rhythmically awkward. In most direct transfers the sound-composition does not achieve the density of Stramm’s originals. Some of my compounds are shaped for better sound-imitation. Especially dense arrangements of long vowels, soft consonants, and intense images, occur in the poem *‘Moongaze’*. In English, the adjective “glühewehe” (‘glow+woe’) is flipped around to “woeglowing”, while the adverb “gähnmüd” (‘yawn+tired’) is shifted to the translation “yawndozed” to recreate the sound. For the archaic German word “wäglos” in the poem *‘Wonder’*, my new composite “poiseless” is chosen for its meaning. The original indicates a notion of “ponderless” as Cook translates,<sup>124</sup> and has a nuance of “weightless” like in Adler’s version.<sup>125</sup> If the curious verb “ich winge” in the previous line, stems from the noun “Schwinge” (wing), the cut off “sch” might directly depict a flight with clipped wings. In this context “poiseless” transports the idea of ‘balance-less’.

Stramm’s striking method of **word-fusion** is more radical than his compounds, melding small parts of words together, which bring their own connotation into the expression. My solutions vary from the nearest direct translation to imitating the word in structure and sound. However, the technique is not always applicable. The first line of the poem *‘Fulfilment’* presents the verb “frechzen” in the original, which fuses “frech” (naughty) and “lechzen” (to gasp for). With a playful note, it is transferred into the composite “lip-tease”. The adjective “screamrolling” in the piece, directly connects the words “scream” and “rolling” for better pronunciation, where Stramm’s original links them with a “k”.

A successful word-fusion is reached in the posthumous poem *‘Unrequited’*. Particularly soft sounds and dense images merge in the adjective “sehnglutschwer”. It is based on the noun “Sehnsucht” (longing), adds the glow of embers (“Glut”), and the tired heaviness of “schwer”. Within the lines “On my soul mourns / your yearnglow-weighed head”, its translation mirrors the softness of the original and fits into the poem’s newly created sound-system.

My imitation of Stramm’s extreme neologism “schamzerpört” in the poem *‘Pleasurehouse’* is “shamedisraged”. As explained to Walden in his letter, the fusion melds the word for “shame” (in German also a reference to



‘private parts’), with “empört”, meaning “enraged”. The verb’s emotional emphasis lies in the syllable “pö”, and the exchange of its prefix for the sharp, destructive “zer-” (English “dis-”) amplifies it further. My solution suits in structure, but surely falls short of the original’s intensity in sound. The translation of the poem’s last word, “Geschlecht”, might be a bit daring. A direct transfer of the common German noun would be very upfront, yet would not embrace all its connotations. Beyond ‘sex’ or ‘genital’, the bigger ideas of ‘gender’ and ‘mankind’ would be excluded. The related linguistic term ‘genus’ led to my invention “genis”. Curiously, it happens to rhyme with the closest solution.

In a different category, the verbs “streakle” for “streifeln” in *‘Passing’*, or “tauntle” for “höhneln” in *‘Unrequited’*, follow Stramm’s insertion of the letter “l”, which expresses a diminutive element. Similarly, the adjective “frostled” in *‘Moongaze’* depicts the idea of ‘frösteln’ (to be slightly chilly) in the prefix construction “verfröstelt”. In contrast to these, the image “[t]hrough the bushes twindle stars” in the poem *‘Dream’*, uses my own word-fusion in its verb, to meld the movement of twigs in the wind with the sight of ‘twinkling’.

In his **prefix-constructions**, Stramm plays with the addition or deletion of prefixes to or from existing word-stems of adjectives, verbs or nouns. Many of my translations imitate the constructs, some drop the prefix, in other cases they dissolve or split from the verb in different solutions. Where prefixes are translatable, like “be-”, which is actually the same in both languages, or “um-” with a sense of ‘surrounding’ to “en-/em-”, a direct transfer is possible. Stramm prefers the transitional prefix “ver-”, and the destructive “zer-”, which are both hard to translate, and add to a word by sound and meaning.

An effective imitation of an expression with “ver-” is “forelonging” in *‘Wavermind’*. The verb “versehnen” creates a feeling of passing (‘vergehen’) and longing (‘sehnen’), which the translation reflects in its sound. The poem *‘Untrue’* mimics the constructed verb “versargt” with “entombs”, while the compound “emberbitten” in the second line simply drops the prefix in the adjective “glutverbissnen”. In *‘Blossom’*, the wish to illustrate the web of little branches and twiglets of the common word “verästelt”,

motivated my own prefix-construct “entwiggled”. Following the same principle, the poem-title *Verzweifelt* with its direct meaning “despaired”, can be read as a prefix-construction, depicting a completed process of separation with the word ‘two’ in its core. Though maybe closer to ‘entzweit’, meaning ‘split in two’, my interpretation *Dis-paired* applies a tiny shift to reveal this double-meaning.

Stramm uses the prefix “zer-” in a sense of “crushing”, as he explains in his letter on “schatzerpört”. Its closest translation into English is the Latin prefix “dis-”, meaning ‘apart’, which carries a destructive element and can express intensive force. Again, beyond my technique of imitation, the construct often dissolves or splits up. Intensifying the verb ‘verkohlt’ (‘chars’) in “Mein Herz / zerkohlt” of *Passing*, my verb-invention “cinders” drops the prefix. The volume’s final poem, *Recall* contains various examples of the method. The notion of ‘wrestling down’ splits the construct in “All die harb zerrungenen Tränen” into my translation “quashed down”. In the last part of the piece the prefix-play expresses cosmic ideas. The formation “I-enthundered” enhances the onomatopoeic original “ich-umbraust”, while “you-encharmed” is a sound-shaped transfer for “duumträumt”, both using a prefix of the surrounding sense. The compound “flame-dissevered” imitates the construction “flammzerrissenen”, resolving in an existing verb.

Sometimes Stramm achieves the intensifying effect by cutting a prefix off a word. My prefix-subtractions follow his example where possible. The verb “armen” is cut from ‘umarmen’ (to embrace), which is replicated in the translation “bracing” in *Quarrel*. In the poem *Gorgeous*, the subtraction “trügen” from ‘betray’ successfully turns into “trayal”, while “tören” (bewitch) disappears in “charming”. *Dream* and *Urge* dissolve “gehren” (to desire) in the translations “yearn” and “lusting”. All verbs have dropped their prefix “be-” and focus the sound on the word-stems. Similarly, the verb “(ge)bären” in *Wonder* transfers directly into “bear”.

A very different case is the word “glimms” in *Moongaze* and *Evewalk*, which follows the originals in cutting the verb-endings. Beyond any of these examples, it is up to the reader to find other transfers of Stramm’s experiments while exploring the volume *YOU. LOVEPOEMS*.

This book is my present for August Stramm, celebrating his work with fresh translations of his love-poems. I hope that the methods of simplifying his grammatical experiments, and dissolving his choice of words into the nuances of English are not an all too painful sacrifice. Aiming to transfer the “hearts” of Stramm’s poems, I carefully chose and shaped my words to his sound and rhythm, melding neologisms into their best possible reflection, while keeping the flow of the originals alive. If my versions capture Stramm’s pieces in their own flow, mirror their rhythmical structure, and bring out the “inner experience” in sound, then I have succeeded. If you can feel the “goosebump-moments” when reading the poems aloud, if I get close to re-creating the most touching and beautiful lines, then I have done Stramm justice and fulfilled the honour of interpreting his work well. I hope, these new translations will bring his poetry to a broad readership across the anglophone world. And with an invitation to view my performances on Youtube,<sup>126</sup> I curiously anticipate international Spoken Word performers rising to Stramm’s challenge to set his poems free. They were written to be heard and will reveal their best on stage.

Erfüllung    *laufen*    *laufen*    *laufen*

*Meine Augen folgen in deinem Ozean*  
*Lebendig hierin die Aenderungen fort*  
*In dieser Zeit fesselt*

*Im*  
*bestimmten Augenblick*  
*Lebige Fingal wegen Anordnungen*  
*Küpfen wesen wegen mit Heilen Gansatz.*  
*Die Lige zerschneid*  
*Gelben ungelten Anordnungen fimmert*  
*Und fimmern die fack zu*  
*Nach einem Fingern kuffet die Luft*  
*Und fimmert den Raum. ~~gute~~ *albeit!* *brüch**  
*Die Finken wegen mit Kallen fack *stren**  
*fack fesseln die Richte den Leite auf*  
*~~off~~ *Gutgefollert.**

*Kettensystem*  
*Stemmen gefest in die fimm*  
*Und fimmert mit dem System and!*

*Einigen Punkten*  
*Systemen und Punkten*  
*Ordnungen im System*  
*Im System*  
*Im Systemwellen *Wasser!**

*Zingalort*  
*Wies mit fimmert die Zeit*  
*Einmal die Zeit!*



Img. 16: Original manuscript of 'Erfüllung'  
 (ULB Münster)



## About the Translator

Susanne Fiessler (aka spoken-word performer Rosalin Blue) was born in a small town near Cologne in 1973 and schooled in Münster, Germany. Comparing a selection of her own with Expressionist poetry, and particularly that of August Stramm in her thesis, she gained an MA in Applied Cultural Studies and Arts Administration from the University Hildesheim. During her study-time, she began performing her poetry in



*Img. 17: Rosalin Blue.*

various German cities, and co-organized literary events with the Forum LiteraturBüro Hildesheim and Literature Initiative KONTEXT.

In 2000 she followed the vibrant literary life in Ireland to Cork for work-experience with the Munster Literature Centre. Five years later she settled in the county with her daughter, working at the Triskel Arts Centre from 2011-14. Her poetic home in the city is the weekly Ó Bhéal poetry night on Mondays. Rosalin Blue has performed at many venues, and participates in events like Culture Night, International Women's Day and World Book Day. Beyond Cork City and County, she has performed in venues in Limerick and Dublin, and at festivals across Ireland, such as the Future Forest, Irish Green Gathering, Dream Gathering, Electric Picnic and LINGO Spoken Word Festival. She also competes in the Munster Heat All Ireland Poetry Slams for the past years, and is known for her captivating performance. Currently, she enjoys venturing into experiments of Spoken Word with other artistic media.

Her poems have appeared in *Southword Journal* print and online, in *An Gob Saor*, *A Cork Millennium Anthology* by the Munster Literature Centre, Cork 2000, in *Revival Poetry Journal*, Limerick, and *Five Words Volumes*, published by Ó Bhéal. Some poetry was published in literary magazines and anthologies in Germany. Her first collection, *In the Consciousness of Earth* was brought out by Lapwing, Belfast in 2012. Since 2014, she is an associate member of the Irish Translators and Interpreters Association (ITIA). Rosalin Blue can be found on facebook and Youtube, where some of her Stramm-translations are published in performance.



## Notes

- 1 Jeremy Adler (Ed.), *DIE DICHTUNGEN. Sämtliche Gedichte, Dramen, Prosa*. Piper, Munich 1990. **[Adler/DICHTUNGEN 1990]**
- 2 Quoted after Dr. Walter Gödden; See home-page of Stramm's literary estate at the University and State Library (ULB) Münster, (last access 7/15):  
<http://www.ulb.uni-muenster.de/sammlungen/nachlaesse/nachlass-stramm.html>
- 3 Jeremy Adler, in: Tim Cross, *THE LOST VOICES OF WORLD WAR I*, London 1988, p. 125. **[Adler/Cross 1988]**
- 4 August Stramm, *DAS WELTEINHEITSPORTO*. Dissertation 1909, Halle 1910. – Due to the idea of a “World-standard postal charge”, today only one stamp is needed on a package, no matter how many countries it crosses on its path.
- 5 August Stramm, *Fünfundzwanzig Briefe an seine Frau*. Lothar Jordan (Ed.), in: Jeremy D. Adler and J. J. White (Eds.), *AUGUST STRAMM. KRITISCHE ESSAYS UND UNVERÖFFENTLICHTES QUELLENMATERIAL aus dem Nachlass des Dichters*. Berlin/London 1979 **[Adler/White 1979]**, pp. 128-152; letter No. 5, 29/12/1914.
- 6 *DEIN LÄCHELN WEINT. Gesammelte Gedichte*; with an introduction by Inge Stramm. Limes Verlag (Ed.), Wiesbaden 1956, p. 3.
- 7 Herwarth Walden(Ed.), *DER STURM. Zeitschrift für Kultur und die Künste*. Verlag Der Sturm, Berlin. Published in Berlin-Halensee 1910–1924, Vol. I-XV. [Further eds. until 1932, see Pirsich 1985, p. 19.]
- 8 Names as on pp. 36/37 of Stramm's diary, see University and State Library (ULB) Münster, Nachlass Stramm Tagebuch\_1,047a, image Stramm\_1,04700076.
- 9 *DER STURM* printed: a) F.T. Marinetti, *Manifest des Futurismus (Futurist Manifesto)*. In: *DER STURM* II (1911/12), March 1912, No. 104, pp. 828-29; and b): *Die futuristische Literatur. Technisches Manifest (Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature)*, 1912 In: *DER STURM* III (1912/13), October 1912, No. 133, pp. 194-95; Both in: Thomas Anz and Michael Stark (Eds.), *EXPRESSIONISMUS. Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1910-1920*, Stuttgart 1982; a) Doc. 155, pp. 588-591; b) Doc. 159, pp. 604-610. **[Anz/Stark 1982]**
- 10 See: F.T. Marinetti, *Parole in Libertá (1913)*, Milan 1914. Published in: Marinetti, *Zerstörung der Syntax, Drahtlose Phantasie, Befreite Worte. (Destruction of the Syntax, Wireless Imagination, Words in Freedom)*. In: Umbro Apollonio, *DER FUTURISMUS. Manifeste und Dokumente einer künstlerischen Revolution 1908-18*. Cologne 1972, pp. 119-130. **[Apollonio 1972]**
- 11 Stramm aims to find “the single all-saying word”, as expressed in his letter to Walden printed with the poem ‘Pleasurehouse’ above. See: August Stramm. *Alles ist Gedicht. Briefe, Bilder, Dokumente*, Jeremy Adler (Ed.), Zurich 1990, letter No. 8 (11. 6. 1914), p. 15. **[Adler/Alles ist Gedicht]**
- 12 Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 327.
- 13 Adler/*ALLES IST GEDICHT*, letter No. 23 (26. 11. 1914), p. 26.
- 14 August Stramm. *TROPFBLUT*. Herwarth Walden (Ed.), *Der Sturm*, Berlin 1919. The poems first appeared in various editions of the magazine during 1915.
- 15 Adler/*ALLES IST GEDICHT*, letter No. 71, p. 61.



- 16 *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE*. Verlag Der Sturm, Berlin 1915, 1<sup>st</sup> ed.; see Staatsbibliothek Berlin: <http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000085D700000000>; (7/15). 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1917, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1919, 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> ed. 1922; See ULB Düsseldorf: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:hbz:061:1-3954>; (7/15).
- 17 August Stramm. *Du*. Edited and with an afterword by Lothar Jordan, Kleinheinrich, Münster 1988, Facsimile re-print Berlin. Der Sturm, 1915
- 18 Adler/*ALLES IST GEDICHT*, letter No. 40 (14/2/1915), p. 38.
- 19 Karin von Abrams, *The "Du" of August Stramm's 'LIEBESGEDICHTE'*. In: *FORUM FOR MODERN LANGUAGE STUDIES* 18, No. 4 (October 1982), p. 311. **[KvA 1982]**
- 20 KvA 1982, pp. 300-301.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300.
- 22 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 129.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 24 Jeremy Adler, *The Arrangement of the Poems in Stramm's 'Du/LIEBESGEDICHTE'*. In: *GERMAN LIFE AND LETTERS*. New Series, Vol. 23, No. 2, January 1980, pp. 124-134. **[Adler/Arrangement]**
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- 26 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 125.
- 27 Adler/*Arrangement*, pp.131-132.
- 28 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 125.
- 29 see Adler/*Arrangement*, p. 133.
- 30 A good insight into Stramm and Vitalism gives Thomas Anz, *Hunger nach Leben*. In: *AUGUST STRAMM. Beiträge zu Leben, Werk und Wirkung*. Lothar Jordan (Ed.), Bielefeld 1995, pp. 53-60. **[Jordan 1995]**
- 31 Prentice Mulford, *DER UNFUG DES LEBENS UND DES STERBENS*. Part I: *DER UNFUG DES LEBENS*, II: *DER UNFUG DES STERBENS*. Selected essays, edited and translated by Sir Galahad, Munich 1909. The book is only available in German and is still in print by Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt Main.
- 32 Ralph Waldo Trine, *IN HARMONIE MIT DEM UNENDLICHEN*. Stuttgart 1904
- 33 Patrick Bridgwater draws up an excellent family-tree of modernist movements and the interrelations between German, English, US and French poetry in: Bridgwater, *TWENTIETH CENTURY GERMAN VERSE*, Penguin Poets, Harmondsworth 1963, p. xli. **[Bridgwater 1963]**
- 34 Wassily Kandinsky, *ÜBER DAS GEISTIGE IN DER KUNST* (Munich 1912); 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Bern-Bümplitz 1952. **[Kandinsky 1912]**
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- 36 See note 9; a).
- 37 Arno Holz, *REVOLUTION DER LYRIK*, Berlin 1899
- 38 Bridgwater 1963, p. x.
- 39 See note 9; b).
- 40 See note 10.
- 41 Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 351.
- 42 Kandinsky 1912, p. 115.

- 43 Stramm's equation "Dichten = Erleben" (writing = experiencing/living) roots in the philosophy of Vitalism, which looks at life through the antithesis of the principles "living" and "dead". For Stramm, this applies to contrasting ideas and imagery. See: Thomas Anz, *Hunger nach Leben*. In: Jordan 1995, pp. 53-58.
- 44 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 124.
- 45 Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 391; See also: John J. White, *Aspects of Layout and Typography in August Stramm's Poetry*. In: Adler/White 1979, pp. 47-68.
- 46 In relation to typography and orthography, see Marinetti, *Parole in Libertá* (1913), In: Apollonio 1972, pp. 119-130.
- 47 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 125.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 See note 11, and letter printed above.
- 50 The idea of a "complex of sensations" is also portrayed by Hans Vaihinger, *DIE PHILOSOPHIE DES ALS OB*. Berlin 1911. This book was another of Stramm's favourites before his encounter with *Der Sturm*. See Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 356; Adler quotes from ed.7/8, Berlin1922, p. 305.
- 51 Letter No. 7, Berlin, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1914, in: Adler/*ALLES IST GEDICHT*, p. 14.
- 52 See note 11, and letter printed above.
- 53 Kandinsky 1912, p. 45.
- 54 See Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 353. Adler refers to Ernst Cassirer, *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff* (1910), which appeared in the *STURM* soon after; He quotes from: Cassirer, *PHILOSOPHIE DER SYMBOLISCHEN FORMEN*, Berlin 1923, p. 91.
- 55 Lothar Schreyer, *Expressionistische Dichtung*. In: *STURM-BÜHNE* Vol. 4/5 (1918/1919), pp. 19-20; Vol. 6 (1918/19), pp. 1-3; Excerpt, pp. 1-2, in: Anz/Stark 1982, Doc. 165 [pp. 623-629], pp. 628-629.
- 56 Herwarth Walden, *Das Begriffliche in der Dichtung*. In: *DER STURM IX* (1918/19), No. 5, pp. 66-67. In: Anz/Stark 1982, Doc. 164 (pp. 618-622), p. 618.
- 57 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 125.
- 58 Rudolf Blümner, *DER STURM. Eine Einführung*, Berlin 1917, p. 7; quote after: Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 327.
- 59 "Niemand war von so vorgetriebenem Expressionismus in der Literatur; er drehte, hobelte, bohrte die Sprache, bis sie ihm gerecht wurde." Alfred Döblin, *BRIEFE*, Olten and Freiburg 1970, p. 751; quoted after Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 328.
- 60 see note 16.
- 61 Paul Hindemith. *Sancta Susanna*, Op. 21, opera in one act from a text by August Stramm, piano- and orchestra score, Mainz 1921. Première at the Frankfurt Opera in 1922. See internet-archive: <https://archive.org/details/sanctasusannaein00hind/7/15>
- 62 Volker Pirsich, *DER STURM. Eine Monographie*. Herzberg 1985, p. 38f. [Pirsich 1985] 'Kräfte' was re-staged 1974 and '75 in Bochum, 1977 in Düsseldorf; 'Rudimentär' was performed 1973 in Berlin and 1982 in Munich.
- 63 see: Adler/*DICHTUNGEN* 1990, p. 389.
- 64 Christoph Hering, *GESTALTUNGSPRINZIPIEN IM LYRISCH-DRAMATISCHEN WERK AUGUST STRAMMS*. Diss. phil, Bonn 1950
- 65 Arno Schmit, *LEVIATHAN UND SCHWARZE SPIEGEL*, Frankfurt Main 1974, p. 56.

- 66 Inge Stramm, *Mein Vater, der Expressionist*, in: *NEUE LITERARISCHE WELT, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung*, Darmstadt 1952, Vol. 3, No. 7, p. 16.
- 67 *DEIN LÄCHELN WEINT. Gesammelte Gedichte*; with an introduction by Inge Stramm. Limes Verlag (Ed.), Wiesbaden 1956
- 68 *AUGUST STRAMM. DAS WERK*, René Radrizzani (Ed.), Limes Wiesbaden 1963.
- 69 Reprints of *Sturm-Books* No. I-XVI, 1914-19, by Kraus, Nendeln/Liechtenstein 1974. Stramm's editions appeared in the following order: No. 1: *SANCTA SUSANNA* (1914), No. 2: *RUDIMENTÄR* (1914), No. 4: *DIE HAIDEBRAUT* (1914), No. 5: *ERWACHEN* (1915), No. 8: *KRÄFTE* (1915), No. 11: *GESCHEHEN* (1916), No. 12: *DIE UNFRUCHTBAREN* (1916).
- 70 Adler/White (Eds.), *AUGUST STRAMM. KRITISCHE ESSAYS UND UNVERÖFFENTLICHTES QUELLENMATERIAL AUS DEM NACHLASS DES DICHTERS*, Berlin and London 1979 [Adler/White 1979]
- 71 Commemorating Stramm's 75<sup>th</sup> death-anniversary, the interdisciplinary event series in Münster was titled *August Stramm. Literatur, Kunst, Kultur im Expressionismus*. It was summarised by the editor in: Jordan 1995.
- 72 see Selected Bibliography, specifically sections 6. and 7.
- 73 *AUGUST STRAMM. GEDICHTE*. Michael Holzinger (Ed.), Berliner Ausgabe 2013; *DRAMEN*, Berlin 2013.
- 74 see ULB Münster, HANS-Handschriftenkatalog; link in note 2.
- 75 *POET LORE – A MAGAZINE OF LETTERS*, Vol. 25, No. 6, Winter 1914; 'The Bride of the Moor', pp. 499-513, and 'Sancta Susanna', pp. 514-522, Boston USA 1914. **[Poet Lore 1914]**
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- 115 Adler/Cross 1988, pp. 134-143.
- 116 Adler/*Arrangement*, p. 131.
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- 120 The poem is translated as 'Twilight' in Adler/Cross 1988, p. 138.
- 121 Cook 1988, p. 11.
- 122 Bridgwater 1969, p. 4.
- 123 Letter No. 7 to Walden, Berlin, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1914, in: Adler/*ALLES IST GEDICHT*, p. 14f.
- 124 Cook 1988, p. 20.
- 125 Adler/Cross 1988, p. 137.

126 Watch me perform Stramm's poems on this Youtube playlist: August Stramm (1874-1915), YOU. LOVEPOEMS. *A Centenary Commemoration*. Translation and Performance by Rosalin Blue.  
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQCDHpt89c4RKG0tQQQastQNYIPW3h5Rd>  
(7/15)



# Selected Bibliography

Beyond literature used in the essay, this bibliography contains selected publications by and about August Stramm with a focus on newest editions, translations, anglophone publications, online videos and audio performances. For further in-depth literature, I refer to Andreas Kramer's Stramm-Bibliography in Jordan 1995, as well as to the Lexikon Westfälischer Autoren 1750-1950 by the Literaturkommission for Westfalen at [www.autorenlexikon-westfalen.de](http://www.autorenlexikon-westfalen.de). Original works ascend by date, all other entries are listed in a descending order. A tag in [square brackets] refers to the abbreviation used for quotes and essays. Last access to all online resources July 2015.

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'Die Menschheit'. Cyclical Poem, written May/June 1914. First print in: *Der Sturm*, Vol. V, No. 2, 7/1914, pp. 58-60. 2<sup>nd</sup> print: *Die Menschheit*. Verlag Der Sturm, Berlin **1917**, 16 pg.

'*TROPFBLUT. Gedichte aus dem Krieg*'. 31 Poems, written in various places during WWI between autumn 1914 to summer 1915. First print in various issues of the *Sturm*. Collated in: *TROPFBLUT*, Herwarth Walden (Ed.), Verlag Der Sturm, Berlin **1919**, 46 pg.



'Weltwehe'. Cyclical Poem, written during WWI December 1914. First print in: *Der Sturm*, Vol. VI, No. 1/2, April 1915. 2<sup>nd</sup> print: *WELTWEHE*. With 16 marble-etchings by Hugo Meier-Thur, Berlin **1922**.

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Seven of Stramm's plays were published as *Sturm-Books*. They appeared in the following order: No. 1: *SANCTA SUSANNA* (1914), No. 2: *RUDIMENTÄR* (1914), No. 4: *DIE HAIDEBRAUT* (1914), No. 5: *ERWACHEN* (1915), No. 8: *KRÄFTE* (1915), No. 11: *GESCHEHEN* (1916), No. 12: *DIE UNFRUCHTBAREN* (1916).

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- Lothar Schreyer, *Der Dichter August Stramm*. In: Wilhelm Stapel (Ed.), *DEUTSCHES VOLKSTUM, Monatsschrift für das deutsche Geistesleben*, Vol. 1, Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, Hamburg 1925, pp. 671-676.
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#### **4. Independent Anglophone Publications about Stramm**

- J.M. Chick, *FORM AS EXPRESSION. A study of the lyric poetry between 1910 and 1915 by Lasker-Schüler, Stramm, Stadler, Benn and Heym*, Studies in Modern German Literature, No. 10, Peter Lang, Bern/New York et al. 1988
- C.R.B. Perkins, *AUGUST STRAMM'S POETRY AND DRAMA. A Reassessment*, Diss. phil., University of Hull 1972



## ***Anglophone Essays on Stramm and References in Monographies***

- Andreas Kramer, "Schrift sagt blasses Unbekannt". *The Poetry of August Stramm (1874–1915)*, in: *OXFORD GERMAN STUDIES*, Publications of the English Goethe Society, Vol. 42, No. 1 (April), Maney Publishing, Leeds/London/Philadelphia **2013**, pp. 38-56.
- Martin Löschnigg, *Expressionist-Artillerist. 'Poet' and 'Soldier' as conflicting Role Models in German Avant-Garde Poetry from the First World War*, in: S. Grace, P. Imbert, T. Johnstone (Eds.), *BEARING WITNESS. Perspectives on War and Peace from the Arts and Humanities*, McGill-Queen's Press, Montreal/Kingston **2012**, pp. 79-92.
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- Milton A. Cohen (Ed.), *MOVEMENT, MANIFESTO, MELEE. The Modernist Group, 1910-1914*, Lexington Books, Lanham, Maryland **2004**
- John J. White, *Futurism and German Expressionism*, in: Günter Berghaus (Ed.), *INTERNATIONAL FUTURISM IN ARTS AND LITERATURE. European Cultures*, Vol. 13, De Gruyter, Berlin/New York **2000**, pp. 39-74; part-chapter: *August Stramm and the Poetry of Der Sturm*, pp. 64-70.
- Richard Sheppard (Ed.), *MODERNISM - DADA - POSTMODERNISM*, Northwestern University Press, Illinois **2000**
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- Jeremy Adler, *August Stramm*. In: Tim Cross (Ed.), *THE LOST VOICES OF WORLD WAR I. An International Anthology of Writers, Poets and Playwrights*, Bloomsbury, London **1988**, pp. 124-127. **[Adler/Cross 1988]**
- Christopher Waller (Ed.), *EXPRESSIONIST POETRY AND ITS CRITICS*, Bithell series of Dissertations No. 11, Institute of Germanic Studies, University of London **1986**; *August Stramm*. pp. 24-45.
- Richard W. Sheppard, *The Poetry of August Stramm. A Suitable Case for Deconstruction*, in: *JOURNAL OF EUROPEAN STUDIES* 15, No. 4 (December 1985), Sage Publications, Chalfont St. Giles **1985**, pp. 261-294; again in: (Id.), *NEW WAYS IN GERMANISTIK*, Oxford, Munich and New York 1990, pp. 211-242.
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- Hans Ulrich Seeber, *Modernisation, Violence and Modern Poetry. Comments on Wilfried Owen, August Stramm and Lascelles Abercrombie*, in: F.K. Stanzel, M. Löschnigg (Eds.), *INTIMATE ENEMIES. English and German Literary Reactions to the Great War*, Beiträge zur neueren Geistesgeschichte 3, No. 126, Winter Verlag, Heidelberg **1983**, pp. 121-136.
- Karin von Abrahams, *The 'DU' of August Stramm's 'LIEBESGEDICHTE'*. In: *FORUM FOR MODERN LANGUAGE STUDIES* 18, No. 4 (October), Oxford University Press **1982**, pp. 299-312. **[KvA 1982]**
- Jeremy Adler, *The Arrangement of the Poems in Stramm's 'DU/LIEBESGEDICHTE'*. In: *GERMAN LIFE & LETTERS*, New Series 33, No. 2, John Wiley & Sons, Oxford **1980**, pp. 124-134. **[Adler/Arrangement]**
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- C.R.B. Perkins, *August Stramm. His Attempt to Revitalize the Language of Poetry*, in: *NEW GERMAN STUDIES* 4, German Dept., University Hull **1976**, pp. 141-155.
- James MacPherson Ritchie, *August Stramm*. In: *GERMAN EXPRESSIONIST DRAMA*. Twayne's World Author Series No. 421, Twayne, Boston **1976**, pp. 53-57.
- Jeremy Adler, *On the Centenary of August Stramm. An Appreciation of 'Geschehen', 'Rudimentär', 'Sancta Susanna' and 'Abend'*, in: *PUBLICATIONS OF THE ENGLISH GOETHE SOCIETY*, New Series 44, Leeds **1973/1974**, pp. 1-40.
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- Robert P. Newton, *FORM IN THE 'MENSCHHEITSDÄMMERUNG'. A Study of Prosodic Elements and Style in German Expressionist Poetry*, De Gruyter Mouton, Den Haag/Paris **1971**; *August Stramm's Trochaic Meter*, pp. 138-142; and *August Stramm – Stress and Line Lengths as Style Elements*, pp. 170-171.
- Christoph Hering, *The Genesis of an Abstract Poem. A Note on August Stramm*, in: *MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES* 76, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore (Maryland, USA) **1961**, No. 1, pp. 43-48.
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## 5. Translations

Susanne Fiessler, *Translations from August Stramm's DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE: A Centenary Commemoration*. Contains essay, pp.1-2, and the poems 'Blüte/Blossom' pp. 4-5, 'Love-Duel/Liebeskampf', pp. 6-7, 'Heimlichkeit/Secrecy', p. 8, 'Siede/Ardour', p. 9, and 'Abendgang/Evewalk', pp. 10-11. In: *BRAIN OF FORGETTING*, Issue 2: "Poppies" (Summer), Cork **2015**

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- Isham Cook, *AUGUST STRAMM: SELECTED POEMS*. Translated from the German, Chicago **1988**; [Cook 1988], e-book:  
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- Patrick Bridgwater, *August Stramm*. In: *THE GERMAN POETS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR*. Croom Helm, London/Sydney **1985**, pp. 38-61.
- Michael Hamburger / Christopher Middleton (Eds. & translators), *GERMAN POETRY 1910-1975. An Anthology*, Carcanet Press, Manchester **1976**; translations by Hamburger: 'Encounter/Begegnung'; 'Melancholy/Schwermut' from *Du*, pp. 8-9; 'Battlefield/Schlachtfeld'; 'Frost Fire/Frostfeuer' from *TROPFBLUT*, pp. 9-10.
- Henry Marx, 'Sancta Susanna' by August Stramm. Article and translation in: *THE DRAMA REVIEW*, Vol. 19, No. 3, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, New York **1975**, pp.18-23; and 'Rudimentary', pp. 24-33.
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- James MacPherson Ritchie / H.F. Garten (Eds. and translators), *GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM. SEVEN EXPRESSIONIST PLAYS*, Calder Collection, London/Dallas **1968**, reprinted 1980 / 2010; translation 'Awakening' by Ritchie, pp. 33-48.
- Patrick Bridgwater, *TWENTIETH CENTURY GERMAN VERSE*, Penguin Poets, Harmondsworth **1963**; [Bridgwater 1963]

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## 6. Online Videos and Performances of Stramm's Poetry (7/15)

'*Battlefield*' by August Stramm, performed in sign-poetry by Werner Mössler, Film, Book, Director: Herbert Gantschacher, Edit: Dieter Werderitsch © ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre 2014-2019, published May 1, **2015**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrpP2rH0A08>

'*Guard*' by August Stramm, performed in sign-poetry by Werner Mössler, Film, Book, Director: Herbert Gantschacher, Edit: Dieter Werderitsch © ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre 2014-2019, published May 1, **2015**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rVBkZgaOLA>

'*Assault*' by August Stramm, performed in sign-poetry by Werner Mössler, Film, Book, Director: Herbert Gantschacher, Edit: Dieter Werderitsch, © ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre 2014-2019, published May 1, **2015**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvGl2wQmyd4>

*YOU. LOVEPOEMS*, August Stramm (1874-1915), Translation and performance Rosalin Blue, uploaded June 1, **2015**: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQCDHpt89c4RKG0tQQQastQNyIPW3h5Rd>

'*Battlefield*' by August Stramm. Video published by *Flamingo Films* with original 12-tone composition for a music theory class assignment, published June 9, **2015**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciTc7cHnhm0>

'*Die Patrouille*' by August Stramm. Visual realisation by *IknoLLx* as a German class-project **2014**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I9wjhVh3N0>

- '*Triebkrieg*' after August Stramm. Theatrical performance on the basis of dramatic poetry-exploration by Michael Bahn, published December 31, **2014**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lUWsBPSCMdg>
- Zech//Stramm, WW1 (German)*, by Tim Kossow. Audio-visual comments on WWI by students at the University of Paderborn (Cinematography) **2014**: <http://www.timkossow.de/331708/4403816/work-play/zechstramm-ww1-%28german%29>
- '*Spiel*' after August Stramm. Theatrical performance by Freie Bildung - Die Theatrale on the basis of dramatic poetry-exploration by Michael Bahn, published July 3, **2012**:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ai69E7rBwY>
- '*Signal*' after August Stramm. Theatrical performance by Freie Bildung - Die Theatrale on the basis of dramatic poetry-exploration by Michael Bahn: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjqJzNXe4wQ>, published November 24, **2012**
- '*Spiel*' Jürgen Westphal reads August Stramm. Uploaded July 26, **2011**:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ehgl9RBQHw>
- '*Schwermut*' by August Stramm. Poetry-film by *Mouviemager*, nominated for the Visionale Leipzig, won the Creative Prize in the video category, published April 18, **2010**:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhrctoOPIOQ>
- '*War Grave*' by August Stramm. Visual performance in sign-poetry by Georg Horngacher and Werner Mössler, ARBOS - Company for Music and Theatre, Director: Herbert Gantschacher, Camera: Olgierd Koczorowski, uploaded April 10, **2009**: [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xap53k\\_war-grave-a-poem-by-august-stramm\\_creation](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xap53k_war-grave-a-poem-by-august-stramm_creation)
- '*Sturmangriff*' by August Stramm. Short-film by *Der Tobi*, accompanying Stramm through the experiences that moved him to write this poem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xR3Cgn525LM>, published June 3, **2008**.
- '*Sturmangriff*' by August Stramm. Poetry-film by *vivalaeve*, uploaded November 16, **2008**:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bT9eKXqeU2g>
- '*Wankelmut*' by August Stramm. Short-film by *PoopFilm* for a German class project, uploaded December 11, **2008**:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQFvuIOZx\\_c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQFvuIOZx_c)

## 7. Online Audio-Recordings of Stramm's Poetry and Drama

- 'Vernichtung' by August Stramm. Audio-book <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiyHMEUo8FI>, published by *Talking Books*, published January 19, **2015**
- Three Love Poems* by August Stramm, Georg Haas - 3 Liebesgedichte (2005) for six voices: Soprano, Mezzo Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass; by Vocal ensemble 'Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart'; audio-recording, published February 14, **2014**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KTJoZW0pLo>
- 'Erhört' by August Stramm. Audio-recital: Wortmann, published March 7, **2013** by *Gedichtvortrag*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuRdFL3r5mU>
- 'Frage' by August Stramm. Audio-recital: Wortmann, published March 7, **2013** by *Gedichtvortrag*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMqiQlJjiGc>
- 'Wunder' by August Stramm. Reisepoesie Folge 8, presented by Paul-Henri Campbell, audio-recital: Gerry Laun, at: *dasgedichtblog*, published July 8, **2013**: <http://www.dasgedichtblog.de/reisepoesie-folge-8-august-stramm-%E2%94%82wunder/2013/07/08/>
- '*Sancta Susanna*', by Paul Hindemith (1895-1963), op. 21 (1921), *opera in one act with a libretto* by August Stramm, RIAS-Kammerchor and Radio-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Director: Gerd Albrecht; Audio-recording uploaded by *TheWelleszCompany*, February 5, **2011**: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3W-uL76uf4>
- Drei Sprechlieder nach August Stramm* (1922), by Wladimir Vogel (1896-1984), for Bariton (Kurt Widmer) and Grand Piano (Werner Bärtschi), Audio-CD, Lausanne 1986, uploaded by *TheWelleszCompany* April 2, **2011**: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_ynnB3W\\_YXs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ynnB3W_YXs)
- '*Patrouille*' by August Stramm. A modernist interpretation for trumpet (Felix Ecke) and Grand-Piano; audio-recording: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAN\\_5augmH4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAN_5augmH4), uploaded by *JulieM*, July 22, **2010**
- '*Erinnerung*' by August Stramm. Kirlian Camera, Electronic music, CD, *Twilight Records (2)*, Argentina 2006, Version 1, uploaded December 14, 2010: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLLTopfzK\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLLTopfzK_0)



Du, *Song cycle for soprano and piano*, composed in 1951 by Milton Babbitt, Son Nova Records, New York 1962; Seven short poems by August Stramm set in twelve-tone music, Audio-recording with Bethany Beardslee and Robert Helps, uploaded October 31, **2009**:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYF\\_EFnBqJM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYF_EFnBqJM)

## 8. Publications on related topics

### ***Expressionism, Futurism and 'Der Sturm'***

Volker Pirsich, *DER STURM. EINE MONOGRAPHIE*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg **1985**; August Stramm, pp. 217-245. [**Pirsich 1985**]

Thomas Anz, / Michael Stark (Eds.), *EXPRESSIONISMUS. Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1910-1920*, Metzler, Stuttgart **1982** [**Anz/Stark 1982**]; contains:

- Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Manifest des Futurismus* [In: *DER STURM* II (1911/12), No. 104 (March 1912), pp. 828-829], Doc. 155, pp. 588-591.
- F. T. Marinetti, *Die futuristische Literatur. Technisches Manifest* [In: *DER STURM* III (1912/13), No. 133 (October 1912), pp. 194-195], Doc. 159, pp. 604-610.
- Herwarth Walden, *Das Begriffliche in der Dichtung*. [In: *DER STURM* IX (1918/19), No. 5, pp. 66-67], Doc. 164, pp. 618-622.
- Lothar Schreyer, *Expressionistische Dichtung*. [In: *STURM-BÜHNE* Vol. 4/5 (1918/1919); pp. 19-20, Vol. 6 (1918/19), pp. 1-3]; Excerpt pp. 1-2, Doc. 165, pp. 623-629.

Mary Rachel Shields, *A STUDY OF THE PERIODICAL 'DER STURM' with Special Reference to its Situation within Literary Expressionism*, Diss. phil. School of European Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich **1978**

Malcolm S. Jones, *AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PERIODICAL DER STURM, its Contributors, and their Place in the Theory and Practise of Expressionism*, Diss. phil., University of Hull **1974**

F. T. Marinetti, *Zerstörung der Syntax, Drahtlose Phantasie, Befreite Worte, Die futuristische Sensibilität (1913)*. In: Umbro Apollonio, *DER FUTURISMUS. Manifeste und Dokumente einer künstlerischen Revolution 1909-1918*, German Translation: Christa Baumgarth and Helly Hohenemser, Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, Cologne/Milan **1972**, pp. 119-130. **[Apollonio 1972]**

Herwarth Walden (Ed.), *DER STURM. Zeitschrift für Kultur und die Künste*, Verlag Der Sturm, Berlin. Published in Berlin-Halensee 1910 – 1924, Vol. I-XV. Re-printed by Kraus, Nendeln/Liechtenstein **1970 [Der Sturm]**

Nell Walden, Lothar Schreyer (Eds.), *DER STURM. EIN ERINNERUNGSBUCH* (Contains Stramm's poems 'Erinnerung', 'Freudenhaus', 'Wankelmut', 'Dämmerung', 'Vernichtung', 'Wunder', 'Schwermut', 'Granatfeuer' 'Kriegsgrab', 'Allmacht'), Verlag Woldemar Klein, Baden-Baden **1954**

Heinz-Peter Dürsteler, *SPRACHLICHE NEUSCHÖPFUNG IM EXPRESSIONISMUS*, (Diss. phil. Bern 1953), Thun Verlag, Bern **1954**

Rudolf Blümner, *DER STURM. EINE EINFÜHRUNG*, Der Sturm, Berlin **1917**

### ***Theories of Influence on Stramm***

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## **Image Sources**

**Cover image:** contains images 1 a/b, and typescript of '*Blüte*', ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,006, Image00001, IDNR: w902

**Img. 1:** a) Portrait 1900 by Arthur Krüger, ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,049, IDNR: if, Img. Stramm\_1,04900003.

And b) August Stramm's business-card, ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,048, IDNR: l305, Img. Stramm\_1,04800003.

**Img. 2:** Original title-page of *DU. LIEBESGEDICHTE* Berlin 1915. From: '*DU*' Europeana Collections 1914-1918, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Staatsbibliothek Berlin, [p. 7]:

<http://resolver.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/SBB000085D700000000>  
(7/15).

**Img. 3:** Three typescripts of '*Untreu*', ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,013, IDNR: w909, Image00011.

**Img. 4:** Original manuscript of '*Zwist*', ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,021, IDNR: w917, Image00008.

- Img. 5:** Original typescript of 'Zwist', ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,020, IDNR: w916, Image00008.
- Img. 6:** Stramm's grave in Horodec 1915, ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_2,008: 8, IDNR: l308, Img. Stramm\_2,008-800007.
- Img. 7:** Stramm Portrait on *Sturm*-postcard 1915. ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,051, IDNR: l306, Img. Stramm\_1,05100007.
- Img. 8:** Original title-page dedicated to Stramm: *DER STURM. Monatsschrift für Kultur und die Künste*, Vol. 6 (1915), No. 11/12, Sturm-Archiv, Bestand der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz; Citation: 2“ Zsn 12361 – 6.1915/16<b>
- Img. 9:** Stramm and his family in Berlin Karlshorst, ca. 1913. Radrizzani, *DAS WERK*, Limes, Wiesbaden 1963, Img. 15, Collection Inge Stramm, Calcutta.
- Img. 10:** International relations of Der Sturm. Graphic by Volker Pirsich, in: *DER STURM. EINE MONOGRAPHIE*, Traugott Bautz, Herzberg 1985, Img. XVII, p. 845.
- Img. 11:** Nell and Herwarth Walden at their home in Berlin Potsdamer Straße. ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_2,008-10, IDNR: l308, Img. Stramm\_2,008-1000003.
- Img. 12:** Detail from reverse of *Sturm* postcard 1915, ULB Münster, Nachlass Stramm\_1,051, IDNR: l306, Img. Stramm\_1,05100009.
- Img. 13:** Detail of cover-illustration by Rigby Graham from: Patrick Bridgwater, *TWENTY TWO POEMS BY AUGUST STRAMM*, Brewhouse Press, Wymondham 1969.
- Img. 14:** Original manuscript of 'Blüte' ('Blossom'). (ULB Münster), Nachlass Stramm\_1,007, Bl. 7, IDNR: w903, Image00010.
- Img. 15:** Early typescript of 'Heimlichkeit', (ULB Münster), N. Stramm\_1,009, IDNR: w905, Image00008.
- Img. 16:** Original manuscript of 'Erfüllung', (ULB Münster), N. Stramm\_1,008, IDNR: w904, Image00008.
- Img. 17:** Rosalin Blue. Photo credits: Michael O'Callaghan 2012.

# August Stramm

## *YOU. Lovepoems*

Translation and Essay by Susanne Fiessler

August Stramm was among the most innovative poets of his time, creating a style of extreme intensity and concentration. His small legacy stands comparison with the international avant-garde.

'*YOU. LOVEPOEMS*' celebrates his poetic achievement in memory of his passing in September 1915. The translations bring out the erotic tone of the originals while keeping their flow alive. '*You*' aims to convey the "inner experience" captured in the poems, and transfer their "heart" to the listener.

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