

PRIX 2022

MAXIME WEBER

ÉCRIVAIN



Institut
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Section
Arts et Lettres

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Initié en 2008, le Prix Arts et Lettres, attribué tous les deux ans, en alternance avec la parution de la revue, avec l'édition 2022 qui a pour lauréat l'écrivain Maxime Weber, en est donc arrivé au terme de son deuxième tour de piste, pour employer une image de spectacle ou de sport. En effet, les six sous-sections, les trois littéraires prises en commun, sont appelées à tour de rôle à opérer le choix du récipiendaire, dans le respect du but fixé à l'Institut, à notre section en particulier, de cultiver les arts et les lettres, d'encourager le travail créateur.

Le roman du lauréat 2022 a convaincu de suite par son ambition originelle : *Das Gangrän*, et changeons encore d'image, s'avère une pelote narrative très riche, très variée, dont les fils sont tenus de main de maître. Et que peut-il arriver de mieux, de plus valable pour l'auteur, en l'occurrence de plus inquiétant pour le lecteur, que de voir la réalité rejoindre, voire dépasser la fiction ?

Au nom de la section, outre les plus vives félicitations à Maxime Weber, il me reste à adresser de chaleureux remerciements aux membres du jury, Germaine Goetzinger et Claude Conter en premier, à Christiane Kremer, responsable de la maison d'édition, à Véronique Kolber et à Arnaud Mouriamé pour la belle réussite de la brochure, à Jérôme Jaminet pour son éloge du lauréat, enfin, mais c'est le sort de la maîtresse de maison, à Nathalie Jacoby, pour son hospitalité réitérée.

Lucien Kayser



[Zum Autor](https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/966/9664/DEU/index.html)

<https://www.autorenlexikon.lu/page/author/966/9664/DEU/index.html>

[Zum Verlag](https://kremart.lu/)

<https://kremart.lu/>

Die Begründung der Jury zur Verleihung des Preises an Maxime Weber für *Das Gangrän* (Kremart Edition 2021) lautet:

Das Gangrän, der 2021 erschienene Debütroman von Maxime Weber, entwirft die Situation einer globalen Bedrohung der Menschheit durch eine unerklärliche, sich unkontrolliert ausbreitende, alles Leben auslöschende Substanz, die als blau schimmerndes Geschwür beschrieben wird. Aus der Perspektive einer nach dem Studium nach Luxemburg zurückgekehrten Protagonistin wird eruiert, welche Formen gesellschaftlicher Organisation und welche Verhaltensweisen sich aus dieser Ausnahmesituation für den Einzelnen im Hinblick auf die unmittelbare Umwelt ergeben.

Indem der 1993 geborene Autor sich in das Genre der *speculative fiction*, der politischen dystopischen Literatur und des Genres der Katastrophenfilme einschreibt, begreift er seinen Roman als Denkmöglichkeit und Versuchsanordnung, um die Auswirkungen globaler Vernetzungen in den Bereichen Umwelt, Wirtschaft und Politik erfahrbar zu machen. Der Autor verwebt aktuelle Diskurse rundum die Klimaveränderungen, die Mediatisierung von Welt durch soziale Medien, die Internationalität von Konflikten, Rassismus, Macht sowie Religions- und Kapitalismuskritik zu einem vielschichtigen Narrativ, der am Ende Engagement, Zivilcourage, Familie, Freundschaft und Solidarität in einem Mikrokosmos als alternativen Gesellschaftsentwurf ausstellt. Das fiktionale Dorf Pardange im Westen Luxemburgs wird als Gegenmodell ebenso zu neoliberalen wie zu autokratischen Kontrollsystemen beschrieben.

Das Gangrän reflektiert das Verhältnis von individuellen Handlungsmöglichkeiten und gesellschaftspolitischen Reflexionen auf einer Metaebene durch die in die Handlung eingeflochtene Schilderung von der Entstehung eines Films sowie durch die Evokation von Klarträumen.

PRESSESTIMMEN

„Duerchduecht Reflexiounen, charmant Uspillungen u bedeitend Science-Fiction-Auteuren, en ausgeräifte Plot, prägnant Charakteren an e fléissenden, räiche Schreifstil sinn hei d'Ingredienten aus deenen dësen iwwerzeegende Roman zesummegevat ginn ass. A grad elo an dësen Zäite wou den Egoismus, d'Spaltung vun der Gesellschaft, d'Angscht virun der Zukunft an d'Onsécherheet eisen Alldag beherrschen en essentiell Stéck Lëtzebuerger Literatur.“

Valerija Berdi, Radio 100,7

<https://www.100komma7.lu/article/kultur/ee-roman-deen-iwwerzeegt>

„So oder so: Maxime Webers literarisches Debüt ist ein dermaßen spannender, bündig und lebendig geschriebener, von Anfang bis Ende durchdachter und handwerklich überaus gut gemachter Speculative-Fiction-Roman, dass einem etwas entgeht, wenn man ihn nicht liest.“

Christine Lauer, Tageblatt

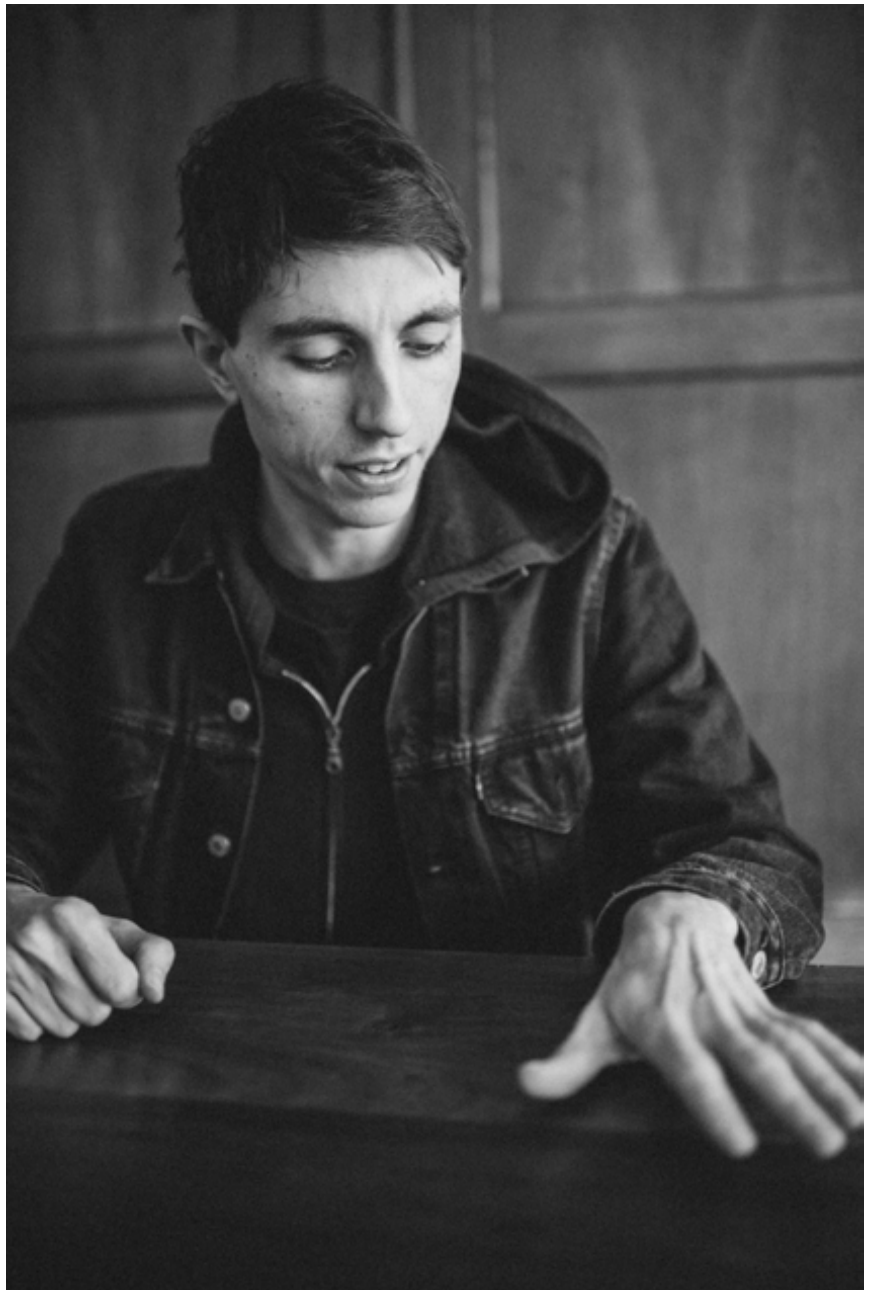
<https://www.tageblatt.lu/headlines/dann-wird-das-ende-kommen-das-gangraen-von-maxime-weber/>

„[*Das Gangrän*] ist nicht nur eine direkte Parabel auf die heutige Zeit, sondern ein sehr zeitgenössisches Werk, das sich den Auswirkungen radikaler globaler Veränderungen widmet – wenn auch hier überspitzt und mit fantastischen Elementen. Es sind Fragen, die eine sehr starke, junge Generation Autorinnen und Autoren umtreiben, ein Literaturtrend, der hier ausgezeichnet und stilsicher Einzug in eine luxemburgische Szenerie erhalten hat.“

Claire Schmartz, Tageblatt, 19.10.2021

Bea Kneip, RTL (“Podcast Literatur vun heiheem”), 19.12.2021

<https://www.rtl.lu/kultur/bicher/a/1832728.html>













EXCERPT FROM 'PARAPHERNALIA'

In the beginning, there is noise.

Relentlessly, it seeps into the clearing that has appeared in its midst. Shapes dance in the noise, redrawing the glade with every dizzying step they take. Some of them transform the clearing into tender ripples of warmth. Others strap the clearing taut around them, forcing it to adopt their pointed frame. And then there are also wondrous figures who emerge from the ever-present noise, making the clearing pause for a moment, and marvel.

To the Glade, there is no difference between itself and the noise. After a while, this changes, though. Both the outlines of the figures and the Glade become clearer, and something emerges from this growing rift between them – a realization.

That Glade in the thrashing noise is you. But, strangely enough, one of the shapes at the edge is also you, distinct from all the others because you can control it, and feel the multitude of sensations that constitute it as your own. Some of it is a solid mass, heavier along the back and leaner in the front, with a void in between that makes up the bulk of your body. Attached to the solid parts are numerous flexible feelers. You can bend those long, thin limbs independently from each other, and touch the things around you. If you move them quickly, they emit sounds that bounce back to you, carrying all the shapes that are not you with them, even those that are too far away to be reached by touch.

Most of the time your limbs sculpture the figures and spaces around you without you even noticing. Your body acts on its own in another significant way too, to the point where you feel like the shape you inhabit commands you – and not the other way around. You come to recognize this sensation as pain. It is a constant companion. Sometimes you forget about it for a while, which makes it fade to nothing more than a simmering hunch. But it doesn't take long until it flares up again, forcing you to deal with it. Touching your lower back reveals that the pain radiates from small, uneven voids strewn across the surface of your body there. You can't understand why something like this even exists in the first place. From time to time, you wish that you could merge with the other shapes again, sharing your pain with theirs, so that no one in particular has to suffer from it. But the Glade and the shapes crowding at its edges remain forever apart.

To distract yourself from the pain, you begin to explore the space that your limbs carve out for you. You realize that it is filled to the brim with others like you. Your kin exist in a multitude of different forms, no one quite like the other, but all similarly confused about just having emerged from the noise. Some of them wander through the space you have found yourselves in – which is yet another one of your peers, as you quickly realize. They have a rectangular form, mostly hidden behind your smaller kin, and cradle you and the others by almost imperceptibly swaying from one side to the other. Others are just lying still and observe everything from afar, sometimes timidly reaching out their manifold limbs when one of the wandering kin passes them. You can't really communicate with any of them yet, but there is this mutual feeling of understanding because all of you have been thrown into this together. Whatever this is.

One being among you is different, though. It navigates the space-kin with much more assuredness and grace, its two lower limbs carving out a way through everything with strange purpose. You are convinced that it must have been around much longer than everyone else, giving it the necessary time to get acquainted with its body and surroundings. Marveling at this

feat, you decide to imitate it one day by swaying your body from one side to the other while slowly inching forward. You quickly regret your decision. After only a few steps, you lose your grip and fall to the side, which makes the slumbering pain in your back surge again, and provokes an irritated grunt from the poor kin you've landed on with your full body weight. After that, you content yourself with lying still and watching.

The strange being seems to have a particular interest in you and the other ones that have just woken up. It moves from kin to kin, looking at them intently. Sometimes it picks them up to carry them somewhere else. The first time it passes you, your curiosity triumphs and you reach out your limbs to touch it, which it gladly allows. You almost reel back from the sensation. While some of it is covered with others of your kin, the being's body itself is made of an alien material, much softer than your own and warm to the touch. After a few more encounters, this doesn't bother you anymore, though, and you begin to appreciate your interactions. Every time the being passes you, it gently pats you first before it picks you up and shelters you with the embrace of its two upper limbs, which makes you feel less delivered to your pain. You wonder if it can tell that you are hurting. Whenever you squirm, you can feel a similar reaction seizing the being's body, and its embrace becomes tighter. It emits soothing sounds, too, which feel like an extension of its touch. Other times it just stands in front of you and watches you. You can't really tell why it does that, but it seems like it is immersed in the sounds you make, so you begin to manipulate your limbs in specific ways, gauging which noises generate the most attention.

After having observed it for some time, it dawns on you that the being watching over you and the others – the Guardian, as you have come to name it – does not live in the same space as you. For a specific stretch of time, it disappears without a trace – which makes you wonder if there are other spaces beyond your own. If you live within a space-kin, they must be contained in some bigger space-kin too, after all.





You begin to long for the Guardian's return whenever it is away, but also when it is present – maybe even more so in the latter case, because the possibility of another embrace becomes almost unbearable. You get restless if it spends too much time with the others, too. But at least the Guardian always comes back to you in the end.

One day, the Guardian is accompanied by another of its kind. Unlike you and your kin, both of them look very similar standing next to each other. There are some minor differences. The Stranger is taller and moves a bit slower and more carefully through the space-kin, which tells you that it must have never visited them before. Your Guardian turns you around, pointing at the parts of your back that hurt, and exchanges a sequence of sounds with the newcomer. The tone lacks the warmth you are used to and seems much more barebones. You begin to tense up.

The Stranger brought more of your peers with it in a miniature space-kin. When it grabs one of them with its branching limbs and picks them up, something odd happens. Your kin no longer seems to be an independent being, but more like an extension of the Stranger's own body that it can manipulate at will. It handles your kin with care, but their relation seems much colder than the one you have with your Guardian. Then it grabs you with its other limb, and suddenly swings down the kin.

Pain bursts into your Glade, much stronger and focused than ever before, a searing jab that forces your whole body to bend around it. Just when the ache starts to subside, another blow follows, and then another one. You don't understand what is happening, or why, and desperately try to communicate to your Guardian that you want it to stop, but you don't know how. What upsets you the most though is that the Stranger uses your kin instead of its own limbs to hurt you. Your whole being revolts at this, down to the core. You can tell that it affects the kin too, their whole body flinching whenever they collide with you.

The pain is accompanied by a feeling you haven't encountered yet. It swells up and pushes outwards through your whole body, seething wave

after seething wave, until it arrives at the tips of your limbs and wants to burst out – anything to make the hurt stop. Without you even willing it, your extremities start to flail and thrash, burying everything around you under a cascade of unidentifiable impressions.

The Stranger backs off with a surprised sound, opening a small window for you to rest.

Through the lifting mists of suffering, you can feel the other being's confusion. The Stranger and your Guardian exchange a few agitated sounds, before the former continues its work where it has left off. You brace yourself for new waves of pain, but the Stranger seems to have become more hesitant, softening the blows. You still flinch every time, but it has become bearable. And then there is your Guardian, too, calming you with soothing sounds and caresses that lead you into the deeper recesses of the Glade, where all the shapes are flowing into each other again, their white crests gently carrying you to shores unknown.

When you finally return, the pain in your body is gone.

Maxime Weber





MAXIME WEBER

1993, Luxembourg

2010 — Present

WRITING

September 2022: English short story 'Fleshgate' published on the Luxembourgish online fanzine 'Aner Welten'

January 2021-October 2022: Play 'Zowaasch' in Luxembourgish written for Maskénada, together with Antoine Pöhu and Cosimo Suglia for Esch22

December 2021: English essay 'World After The Waves: What Our Post-Pandemic Life Might Look Like' published in the special edition '#AfterCovid' of the magazine 'Nos cahiers'

October 2021: German novel 'Das Gangrän' published by Kremart Edition

2020: English short story 'Anagogikos' published in 'Les Cahiers luxembourgeois'

2020: 2nd prize in the literary contest 'Young Voices' for the English short story 'Panima'; later publication in the 'Young Voices. Short Fiction by Young Writers' anthology by Black Fountain Press

2017-2018: Member of the literary collective 'New Literary Voices'

2016/2017: 1st prize in the literary contest 'Prix Laurence' for the German short story 'Chaudron fêlé'; later published in 'Anthologie Prix Laurence - D'Laureaten 2015-2016' by Editions Guy Binsfeld

2010: German Short story 'Der vierte Affe' published in the 'Mord und Totschlag' anthology by Editions Saint-Paul

2011 — Present

MUSIC

2019-now: Solo project 'death was a mistake' (ambient/post-rock/dream pop/shoegaze), release of the album 'there are gardens in the abyss' in May 2021

2019-now: Synthesizer & lyrics for the shoegaze/post-punk band 'Memés For the Portuguese' (PT/LUX/DE/SV); release of a demo in March 2021

2015-2017: Synthesizer, Noise & Backing Vocals for the grindcore band 'TODESNOT' (NZ/DE/LUX); release of the EP 'Malaise' in January 2017

2012-2015: Synthesizer, lyrics & visual artist for the doom metal band 'Plaguewielder' (LUX); release of the album 'Chambers of Death' with financial support from FOCUNA in August 2015

2011-2012: Guitar & lyrics for the crust punk band 'Discordant System' (LUX)

2013 — Present

MUSIC VIDEOS & SHORT FILMS

August 2020: Screenwriter, director & editor for the music video and teaser for the song 'Wishing Well' by Lithuanian artist Lemon Kick

2019: Screenwriter for the music video for the song 'Money' by the Luxembourgish punk band The Disliked

2018: Co-director & screenwriter for the music video for the song '100k' by the Luxembourgish rappers Turnup Tun & Skinny J

2015-2016: Screenwriter, director, camera man & editor for the short film 'Hypnos' which was later shown at the 'Short Film Corner' at the 69th Cannes Film Festival and 'Openscreen'-Event at the Luxembourg City Film Festival

2015: Screenwriter & director for the music video for the song 'Father Suicide' by Luxembourgish doom metal band Plaguewielder

2014-2015: Screenwriter, director, camera man & editor for the short film 'Epilogue' which was later shown at the 'Trotzdem!' festival at the Glockenbachwerkstatt in Munich

2013: Screenwriter, director & camera man for the music video for the song 'Ritual' by the US-American doom metal band Snail

EDUCATION

Oct 2017 — Oct 2020	M. A., Freie Universität Berlin Philosophy. Master thesis: 'Body and Film. A phenomenological examination of the experience of watching movies according to Hermann Schmitz'
Oct 2013 — Feb 2017	B. A., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München Philosophy (Major). Bachelor thesis: 'Time in movies. An examination in connection with Tarkovsky and Deleuze' Art History (Minor)
2006 — 2013	Secondary School, Lycée de Garçons Luxembourg Language and literature section

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2022: 'Fleshgate' on the Luxembourgish online fanzine 'Aner Welten' (Short story in English)

2022: 'Zowaasch' written for Maskénada, together with Antoine Puhu and Cosimo Suglia for Esch22 (Play in Luxembourgish)

2021: Essay 'World After The Waves: What Our Post-Pandemic Life Might Look Like' published in the special edition '#AfterCovid of the magazine 'Nos cahiers'

2021: 'Das Gangrän' published by Kremart Edition (Novel in German)

2020: 'Anagogikos' in 'Les Cahiers luxembourgeois' (Short story in English)

2020: 'Panima' published in the 'Young Voices. Short Fiction by Young Writers' anthology by Black Fountain Press (Short story in English)

2016/2017: 'Chaudron fêlé' published in 'Anthologie Prix Laurence - D'Laureaten 2015-2016' by Editions Guy Binsfeld (Short story in German)

2010: 'Der vierte Affe' published in the 'Mord und Totschlag' anthology by Editions Saint-Paul (Short story in German)

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SECTION DES ARTS ET DES LETTRES

L'Institut Grand-Ducal a été créé en 1868, dans le « but de cultiver les sciences, les lettres et les arts ». Il groupe six sections : Histoire, Sciences naturelles, Médecine, Linguistique, Sciences morales et politiques, Arts et Lettres. Cette dernière se compose des sous-sections : « Littérature française », « Littérature allemande », « Littérature luxembourgeoise », « Musique », « Théâtre, Danse, Cinéma et Médias », « Arts plastiques et Architecture ».

Conformément à son règlement organique, la section a pour but de cultiver les arts et les lettres et d'encourager toutes autres activités à caractère artistique et culturel. Elle groupe des personnes qui, par la valeur de leur travail, méritent d'être réunies en un collège représentatif des activités artistique et littéraire dans notre pays. La section fait publier les travaux des sous-sections et concourt à la publication d'ouvrages dont la valeur a été reconnue et pour autant qu'ils rentrent dans le domaine des activités de la section. L'activité des membres est bénévole. À part les réunions du Conseil d'Administration, traditionnellement la section se réunit en assemblée générale deux fois par an.

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- 2008** Nora Koenig, comédienne
2010 Pascal Meyer, musicien
2012 Eve-Lynn Beckius, architecte
2014 Nora Wagener, écrivain
2016 Léa Tirabasso, chorégraphe et danseuse
2018 Tatsiana Zelianko, compositrice et pianiste
2020 Eric Schumacher, artiste plasticien

PUBLICATIONS PRÉCÉDENTES

- 2002** 40^e Anniversaire INSTITUT GRAND-DUCAL –
Section des Arts et Lettres
2002 Deutschsprachige Lyrik in Luxemburg
ISBN 2-9599954-1-4
2004 Vom Dekadentempel zur Kulturschmiede. Zweihundert
Jahre Theatergeschehen in Luxemburg, André LINK
ISBN 2-87963-486-5
2005 Dem Marcel REULAND säi Wierk (2. Oplo)
ISBN 2-9599954-8-1
2009 Josée ENSCH : Glossaire d'une œuvre –
"de l'amande... au vin"
Jalel EL GHARBI – Illustrations : Iva MRAZKOVA
2009 Publication N°1 ARTS ET LETTRES / ISSN 2073-2694
2011 Publication N°2 ARTS ET LETTRES / ISSN 2073-2694
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