abend(b)rot
Many Thanks
&
Vielen Dank
:
to all who contributed to
inspired
grammatically corrected
and otherwise aided in
the creation of this Zeitschrift
a note on the title:

‘Abendbrot’ is a German term that refers to a light meal eaten in the evenings (evening - bread). ‘Abendrot’ is a sunset.
Though this celebration of work a communion of sorts comes at the ‘sunset’ of our time together in Berlin, we hope that it will also be nourishing and voll(of)korn, like a good hunk of proper German bread.

Guten Appetit.
Variations on trains and Berlin
Paola Valenti

Let’s go on a train ride.
I want to feel the wind on my eyelashes
And smell the friction of brakes
And see the windmills milling round and round
While I hear energy sizzle through sun-licked panels
And taste Deutschland
With your fingertips touching mine.

Let’s go on a train ride.
I want to see the wind push my face
And feel the squealing brakes
And hear the windmills eternally chasing
While I smell energy sizzle through sunburnt panels
And taste Berlin’s countryside.
Except now we’re here and it’s too late.
Welcome to the middle of the city.
I am Anastasia and I approve this message.

Let’s go on a train ride.
They’ve got gleaming yellow and red metal
Blurs through the wormholes.
The occasional graffiti makes you look twice
Because regardless of what happens out there
Down here we must be spotless.
No wall remnants here.
Welcome to Berlin,
Stadt. MIT’Te.
Ich bin Anastasia.
if we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it for anyone at all. if we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it for anyone at all. if we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it for anyone at all. if we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it for anyone at all. if we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it for anyone at all.

Get in line,

-jaclyn may
au revoir (no time for homesickness)
by Charissa Isidro

My parents didn’t know a thing. I mean, they did know, but they didn’t really
know. It was just two leopard print bags and me. See-you-soon’s were said (strictly no
goodbyes), hugs were given (strictly no handshakes), tickets were printed and ready
(strictly no tardiness). So much excitement and unpredictability for a meticulously
planned trip.

Stairs and puddles, such trivial obstacles become the bane of a 19 year old
girl’s existence. But helping hands were always around. Strangers can be truly kind. No
time for homesickness.

Victoria Coach Station to Amsterdam is 12 hours. Such a long haul yet I was
thrust (or rather, driven) into the complete unknown overnight.

Two nights in Amsterdam was barely a glimpse, though it seemed I spent
years studying faces, accents, quirks from my corner seat on tram 12. I could live here,
I thought. Right next to a canal.

Those two nights were filled with flashing lights, electronic music and still life.
The occasional Frikadellen. No time for homesickness.

In four hours I was somewhere else. Welcome to Oslo. The sky was dark and
white at the same time. A kind of impending darkness, sugar-coated. My breath rose in
front of me. I caught the last train into the city. More sugar-coated darkness. My
footsteps were followed by wheels on either side. I made my mark, but was quickly
covered up.

Two in the morning and I collapsed.

Into a wonderland of statues and trolls and scenic rides. No time for
homesickness.
Stockholm was another story, like the projection of a perfect picture... carved out of distant memories... dreamed out of my nostalgic mind. The setting sun sent silence to the harbor and a peaceful emptiness arose.

I spent my Christmas Eve in a 7-Eleven.

Air fought with snow with waves with mankind. Lights pointed me towards home where Christmas was hidden behind curtains and around fireplaces. Laughter permeated over dinner tables and blood sausage and fermented fish. A family spoke in three languages, in Swedish, in English, in love. They were my family for the night.

No time for homesickness.

A five-hour train ride left my mouth dry, my eyes bloodshot and my body in Copenhagen. What a quaint little city. What an expensive little city. (Sorry Ma, the buffets were all they had and I didn’t know how to do math.) I’m too tired for this.

Falling in love is hard. Travelling is exhausting. A little spiral took me to a little spot in heaven and a little breath of fresh air. Sometimes we need to go up to clear what’s up there. A moment of clarity and awe.

My lungs, my mind, and my eyes all thank you, Copenhagen. But I’ve got to go.

No time for homesickness.

I arrived in Berlin on the morning of the last day of 2014. A day of festivity, and fireworks. A day of getting spatially intimate. A day of new resolutions, new beginnings, new friends, new failures. As the day slowly turned to afternoon and drifted into evening I contemplated what would come past midnight. Nothing, probably. And everything at the same time.

I spent the last few hours in the collective body heat of a million drunk giddy Berliners, laughing at David Hasselhoff, pretending I could understand German. Es gibt nichts, was mich hält. No distractions. No obligations. No guilt. No pretentiousness. Au revoir. Strictly no time for that. Vergesst, wer ich war. Vergesst meinen Namin. I woke up to glass and confetti coloring the streets. Es wird nie mehr sein, wie es war. Berlin, you’re a mess. But I’m ready for you.

Fifteen whole weeks of your weirdness.

Ich bin weg, au... au... Definitely no time for homesickness now. Au revoir.
I remember a middle-aged man who stepped onto the U-Bahn. He held nothing but the pole he stood in front of, facing the rest of the train car. And he would try to beat the pre-recorded announcements by saying them first.

The imitating man knew the station order well and would remember the slight variations in the announcements and warnings to “Einsteigen bitte” or “Zurückbleiben bitte.”

He might have given off the impression of being crazy talking to himself or talking to the whole train or trying to be the train. But my companion assured me not to worry, that he had seen the man another day doing the same thing.

He got the exact words wrong sometimes and then would snap his fingers in disappointment. And an older, drunk man who only seemed to speak English would crack up laughing, entertained by the whole thing.

But when the imitating man’s memory and timing triumphed machine He was ecstatic.
don’t ask for my name
Jackie Horowitz

i spilled hawaiian punch when i smelled you for the first time.
citrus and sweat punched me in the face, tenderly.
your natural body odor was not as i had imagined, so
i ran to the bathroom to regroup.

the bathroom mirror advises me to give up.
motivated and drunk,
i gather my hair in a half-up half-down edgy style like Eliza Dushku, but i remember how dylan thought i looked

the party, top floor, lots of people, few memories

a group of high waisted jeans and you are talking,
and i study how your eyelashes dip in sync with the words you say that i cant pronounce.
everyone talks about gender roles, and
a tightrope of spit stretches from your lips to a cup filled with something gross and pleasurable.
drink faster. catch up with me.

now won’t everyone shut the fuck up and make room for your encyclopedic breath.
carry on about you sticker collection, feminism, rock and roll dreams
im so not worthy, but what do i have to lose
drink faster. catch up with me.

my throat vibrates and and i hear my voice trying to impress you with unusual sentence structure.

you look at me now,
the hairless patch in your adorable eyebrow grabs me,
i accidentally smile.
you ask me my name.
my heart breaks.

i want to snort and say are you serious?
i want to stroke your pinky finger and talk about the fb pictures i saw of your cousin’s quincenera this october.
where’d you find that shirt with the rhinestone cowboy boot patches?
do you often cry alone in public with your head in yours hands like you did last semester?
are you okay?
let me.

i something-like-love you too much to introduce myself.
this love, superficial and yet untouchably sincere.
dont ask me to explain.
dont ask for my name.

the rubber band around my forearm tugs, and i start coming down,
i finally can speak, and i tell you my name.
meeting you for the first time, i forget how well i knew you.
im no longer nameless and in love. im no longer powerful.
perhaps
invincibility and invisibility, just two fonts smudged on the same page.
don't ask for my name

Jackie Horowitz

i spilled Hawaiian punch when i smelled you for the first time. citrus and sweat punched me in the face, tenderly. your natural body odor was not as i had imagined, so i ran to the bathroom to regroup.

the bathroom mirror advises me to give up.

motivated and drunk, i gather my hair in a half-up half-down edgy style like Eliza Dushku, but i remember how dylan thought i looked ugly like that. i just leave it down.

the party, top floor, lots of people, few memories. a group of high waisted jeans and you are talking, and i study how your eyelashes dip in sync with the words you say that i can't pronounce.

everyone talks about gender roles, and a tightrope of spit stretches from your lips to a cup filled with something gross and pleasurable. drink faster. catch up with me.

now won't everyone shut the fuck up and make room for your encyclopedic breath. carry on about you sticker collection, feminism, rock and roll dreams. i'm so not worthy, but what do i have to lose.

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perhaps invincibility and invisibility, just two fonts smudged on the same page.
Slip

*Sveta Pyntikova*

Slipping into a dive
Taken from a breath
I don’t know what to say
I don’t know what is left

One, I said to you.
Two—did it go through?
Three—I’ll try again.
Four—I hold my breath.
    You lower your eyes.
    You know what’s coming.
    I don’t know how.
    Unless, you lied.

Slipping into a dive
Only because of the water
I hope I’ll break I’ll the surface
Please say that you’ll remember

Enough, I said to you.
Yes—you know it too?
Now—say something back.
Where is the light your eyes once had?
Don’t say I took it.
I lost mine at your feet.
Please don’t, don’t go farther.
Please come back to me.

Slipping into a dive
Because I lost my grip
My hands can’t hold this weight
I have to let it
    slip
Eisfabrik

Lola Harney
Ode to Paprika
_Elena Robakiewicz_

For what shall we do on a long, tiring day,
But snack on some munchies to pass time away.
We stop off at Lidl, at Rewe, at Chickpea,
But nothing can satisfy like something real crispy.
Whether hungry or tired or drunk or lazy
It’s that taste of paprika that makes our minds crazy.
We desire that salty, we desire that sweet,
There is nothing better than paprika to eat.
But now we are off to a land without heaven
So grab paprika bags: two, four, even seven.
As we ride on the planes our minds slowly wander
Of the food we consumed but cannot, no longer.
So cheers to you paprika for all you’ve provided
And now we’re stuck with Lays… fuck.
Bad Poetry
Ariana DiValentino

These here on my chest are not just bottles—
Well look here, they double as playthings
and as magnets, and bombs
and nothing at all.

Nature is a conservationist:
matter is never created or destroyed, and no skin will be wasted.
I was born of more than my parents
The I is the only part of me that can die.
There's a pile of flowers next to my head
and one in front of me
with one petal left
What'll it be?
I loathe her - I love her - I loathe her - I love her
I go into a slumber
once she's picked me, pricked me,
once she's kicked me,
molded me into a drugger
of my own emotions, my own motions
so that I've tricked me
to crumble, stumble, tumble
slow into a hole
that she's dug in my name
and spun me snug into chains
won't let me escape
but contains this pain in my brain
sustains this migraine
keeping me breathing
by blowing air in my mouth
like a hurricane.
So call me crazy, call me crap
Spit on me, I can handle that
but don't you dare go
and put a foot through that door
Who am I to pull you?
Who am I doing this for?
There never came a point when I had any choice
Jekyll let Hyde in through his own front door
Jekyll drank just once, and Hyde drank again
The chief of sinning and suffering
There’s no way to win
You put the drink back in my and
Especially when I refuse, but no one hears my voice and
it’s out of control, Jekyll can’t lock the door
Hyde will creep in when he’s asleep
and then the potion won’t work, Jekyll’s locked inside the door
of his own body, trying to claw out from inside
but by then I’m Mr. Hyde
and you are Mr. Seek.
Sinning, suffering chiefs that can’t get any sleep.
I’m falling, yes, I’m falling, and she calls me back again
but I was pushed into the fall.
Is it better to hurt than to feel nothing at all?
Because some days that voice and I agree
On those days it’s the only voice that understands me
So I sink into my bed like I sink into the sea
and it says
“I’m not going to let anything happen to you... except me.”
My brain is losing to disease like it’s dipped in LSD
I’ve pictured myself in a boat on a river
and the water is murmuring, you love her, you love her
One petal left on the flower
No I loathe her
and what she put in my cup
making me think that I’m drunk
in love, high on hate
in that grey place where I can’t say
what I think and I can’t think straight.
She says, “Darling, I’m not love, I just tell you what to say.
And don’t you love me? Don’t you want your air, your sight, your sound?
Don’t I breathe for you? Don’t I see for you? Don’t I move-hear-think for you?
Don’t I?”
Don’t you?
I say I know. I’m sorry. Please stay.
Misery loves company.
She smiles and says,
“And your company loves misery.”
parking garage
Lola Harney
My mind is elsewhere
My mind is always elsewhere
My mind is elsewhere

Why do I always
Try to find a reason to
Let myself wander

Through infinite space
Through smoky bars and night clubs
Through every minute

Why do I always
Try to find a reason to
Always dance alone

Through infinite space
Through smoky bars and night clubs
Through every minute

To drown all the [blank]
With alcohol, sweat and sleep
Alone. Forever?

River Anton
Four

Annalise Goeke

I coast home, foot dangling from the pedal of my borrowed bike and the storm follows me in. Roaring wind and thunderheads so thick they bring night right along with them. I lock up the bike, rush to my room and drop my groceries. All I want is to be outside. I trip over my feet on the stairs, but make it out anyway.

This isn’t home. There’s no sheltered porch, no view for miles. There are two swings and a seesaw and multistory, multifamily apartments to block the sky. On the roof of one stands five friends. I can just barely catch their sounds over the wind. Four rush to clear the space—make room for the storm. At the highest point, stands one with can in hand. I watch him as the wind whips his shirt about and he stares over the city.

I wonder how far he can see from there. Can he see the Spree? The waterways and bridges, the train tracks? Can he see another land at the edges of the horizon? Does he dream of something more?

One of his friends shouts and just like that, he’s running through the stairwell door to shelter.

The internet says that Germany can have tornadoes too, and looking at the trees bend, part of me hopes to see one. No casualties no damage, just green skies and hail, and that electricity in your skin.

Instead, the clouds blot out the light of the evening sky and the wind slowly putters to a stop. It barely rains. My hair doesn’t stick to my face and I pick myself up and go to shelter, just like he had.

I grew up in storms. They were both my greatest threat and thrill. Nothing compared to a summer night thunderstorm. Sitting wrapped up in a beach towel, sticky skinned from the humidity of the day, in the glow of the flood lights. Hours spent under an old tin roof, counting the seconds between a lightning flash and the thunderclap. One Mississippi, two, three Mississippi, four. The crack shakes the foundation and we jump. Four miles out, just enough to rock your bones.

Berlin hasn’t offered me a storm yet, and I doubt I’ll see one before my flight out. There’s a familiarity we’ll never share, the city and I. She’s given me a taste though, and glimpse into what she can be and what she loves. And when I think of her, I’ll see the water of the Spree made choppy and the light of the Fernsehturm obscured in clouds, and remember fondly the storm that brought me home.
Untitled
Nicole Schenkman
It Will Always be Frühlings in Berlin

Christian Mendonça

Make a wish on a dandelion:
Be rough; be gentle
Desire; Hope
Huff; puff
Blow
The streets here are full of their cotton-like spores
They stitch together to create a blanketing,
A duvet of sorts that embraces you
It’s a warm sensation
Gemütlichkeit
Wish.
Add to the spree of wild spores flitting about
Taking time to get to know each other
Making the most of each other
Adding on to each other
Lending energy
Creativity.

This
Is
The
City
At
Work
Make a wish.
Huff
Puff
Blow.
Gleisdreieck

Charissa Isidro

Gleisdreieck
my favorite place
over the bridge
around the bend
enter park here
are those trampolines?
jump, jump, jump!
Gleisdreieck
walk me to
the train tracks
race me to
the swings, go!
as high as
you possibly can
Gleisdreieck
watch the fireworks
talk about life
ride a bike
pet a dog
look at that
big goofy smile
Gleisdreieck
hold my hand
run with me
right over there
let’s scream Wald!!!!
into the forest
no one cares
Gleisdreieck
wann kann ich
dich wieder sehen
ich weiße nicht
aber du bist
immer mein Lieblings
vergiss mich nicht
Gleisdreieck
Today I’m sitting here thinking about nothing.
My mind has been blank for a majority of the days since my arrival.

Time likes to pass over me, leaving me in an almost haze.
The days seem to drag over me, leaving me in a puddle on the floor.

I try to do work, but it’s futile.
I’m not interested in the subjects or the contents.
I’m only interested in the moments.

I haven’t started packing because if I do, I’m not sure I’ll remember.
I’m not sure I’ll be able to remember the order of everything,
Or which belongs to whom.

I’m not sure I’ll remember how to know myself, in the same way.
I’m a little afraid of slipping backward, but equally so going forward.

It likes to rain here in the spring.
I try to wear shoes with traction to keep my step.

It’s been getting more difficult to walk lately.
I trip up quite a bit.
polaroids

Christian Mendonça
2/5/15

Berlin, This is a love letter. To you. But I’m not sure what to write about. I keep reading everything I’ve written over the past year and all the memories that keep flooding back with every entry seem to hurt rather than make me happy. I miss my mum and dad, I miss my friends and I’m dreading that moment when I begin to miss the people here… and when I finally begin to miss you.

Maybe I should write about embracing every experience and making memories instead of taking photos.
About friendships, finite or for a lifetime and appreciating both the same.
About the shitty tequila at santa maria and getting kicked off the bus for eating noodles.
About waiting in line for Berghain for an hour and getting turned away at the door.
About dancing on a Sunday night instead of doing your homework.
About drinking by the river spree with friends
About the m29 always being so late
About every Italian tourist on the U2 that gets off at Alexanderplatz
About living experiences that I can’t articulate to my friends back home.
About partying and celebrating absolutely nothing but life itself every weekend.
And about forgetting to go home.

Or maybe I should write about loving a city who’s “nächte fressen mich auf”
Or how I’ve “found” myself here and yet have given parts of myself to this city that I will never be able to take back again.

Berlin. You’re like the girl that I’d meet at Ray’s Pizza at 4am who’s still stunning even though her hair’s all frizzy and her make up is all over her face.

You’re beautiful to me; but you’re no good for me.
One day we’ll meet again and I’ll dance in your darkness and stumble home across your streets.
But until then, I think it’s time to say goodbye and thank you.
Thank you for the best year of my life. For all the happiness, sadness, pleasures and the hangovers.
Without you, I’d still be an insecure 12 year old with a shaved head and glasses stuck in a 21 year old’s body, trying to convince the people around him that alles ist gut.
You’ve imparted on me a wealth of knowledge about myself and about the world and that is a prize that cannot be won or bought.
Ich liebe dich, Berlin. Du bist am besten Stadt in der Welt.
Ich habe ein Teil von dir für immer.

I will see you again soon, but for now lass uns tanzen für die letzte Zeit.

River Anton
I won't remember Berlin. I won't remember when I first saw a piece of the Wall or drank a German beer. I'll forget the crisp whiteness of my bedroom and the rolling red desk chairs we spent so much time in. But I'll remember the layout of the kitchen. Maybe because of all the dancing we did there.

I'll remember the first day of orientation, sitting alone in the AC feeling miserably sick and helpless. Anne, Lygia, and Linn—these cool, sophisticated German women whom I had interacted with for all of two seconds—were asking me how I felt and talking about calling me a cab. *We're like your big sisters*, Linn told me.

I bet they don't remember that.

I'm sorry Katrin, but I don't think I'll remember all the different translations of *Verfremdung* or the odd nuances of *Gestus*. I'll remember you, though. I'll remember when you said, "Oh bother!" like an old English aristocrat. I won't remember the conversation in which you said it.

I'll forget all of these grammatical labels—*dativ* and *modal* and *offiziell*. But I'll remember *Kann ich Deutsch mit Ihnen üben?*

I'll remember the Späti just outside Kochstraße, the Indian restaurant out in Zone B, and an absurd amount of falafel from Chickpeas & Friends. I'll remember Mike—only Mike—shouting, "Turn uuuup!" And maybe I'll remember that it happened every 5 seconds. I'll remember getting tipsy on mojitos and some weird impossible Christmas tree bowling game and mariachi music playing in the background. And I'll remember just the perfect feeling of being in a crowd of good people who I now know quite well, of a spring wind and of laughter from some joke I can no longer recall.

I'll forget people. I'll forget conversations. Days will disappear from my mental collection, as they're inclined to do, and that's a shame because I bet there were good ones. But that's incidental. I might even forget that for the whole train ride to Weimar, I sat and talked about forgetting. That it was said aloud, "I hope we remember this."

Maybe I'll forget everything I said I hoped I would remember.

We get to keep so little, and the rest is just—

And it seems there's no rhyme or reason. What is it about an empty street on the first night of spring or a pair of kind eyes that allows them to persist, so perfect and clear in my recollection?

I won't remember *Berlin*. Nothing so huge can come back to us intact, so in the back of our minds we fill in the blanks between disjointed pieces. Wherever I am in the years to come I might find myself looking back on a mess of smiles and street signs and songs. Not Berlin. Not this city. But a warped, fixer-upper of a fantasy. Nonlinear and undone--but sort of like something that must have happened. Right?
Berlin Poem

Jackie Ledesma

The drumming in the park is your heart beat,
And the dancing bodies, your sighs of relief.

You show strength in the buildings you hold up and weakness in the ones you allow to be rebuilt.

Your smile exists in the rows of flowers blooming in the spring and your laughter in the rustling of leaves.

I stare to look past you sometimes.

Past your decorative towering yellow cranes

Floating—

In front of the fading orange backdrop

You hold so well.

Past all of that

I see

Your empty spaces.

In what do you define yourself?

Tell me

But don't try to make sense of it.

There is no time for making sense.

Tell me who you are today

And then tell me who you are tomorrow.

There is no time to be.

There is only time for being.
“Tell me who you are today
And then tell me who you are tomorrow.”