

Elfe Vallaster-Dona

German-American Literary Reviews

Von Partituren, Lesezeichen, und so weiter: 60 Bilder mit 12 Collagen und Umschlagbild von Annegret Heintl.

By Margot Scharpenberg. Duisburg: Gilles & Francke, 2003. 124 pages. EUR 14.60.

StadtFluchten, CityEscapes: Selected Poems.

By Claudia Becker. Translated by Jerry Glenn, Renate Sturdevant, and Aine Zimmerman. Edited by Jerry Glenn and Maja Gracanin. Cincinnati, OH: Cincinnati Occasional Papers in German-American Studies, 2004. 28 pages.

Wooden Shoe Hollow: Charlotte Pieper's Cincinnati German Novel.

Edited by Don Heinrich Tolzmann, Milford, OH: Little Miami Publishing Co., 2004. xxxix + 275 pages. \$22.50.

Near Occasions of Sin.

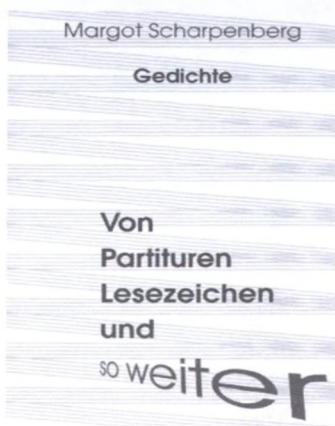
By Stuart Friebert. Long Beach, California: Doom-Ah Books, 2004. 70 pages. \$12.00.

The Country I Come From: Poems.

By Norbert Krapf. Santa Maria, California: Archer (Midpoint Trade, distr.), 2002. 142 pages. \$15.00

In her most recent volume of poetry *Von Partituren, Lesezeichen, und so weiter* German-American author **Margot Scharpenberg** returns to a format she has used successfully before in many of her twenty-six volumes of poetry and three books of prose. She fuses sixty German poems with twelve collages of visual representations. 12 black-and-white scores by visual artist, Annegret Heintl accompany her poems. All pictures are variations of the same geometrical shapes of score sheets. It is interesting to see how Scharpenberg and Annegret Heintl work together with media to create a new whole.

In the first twelve of her poems Scharpenberg uses signs to draw a metaphor between her poems written on sheets of paper, to the lines and notes found on a page of sheet music. In a sense the reader receives the denotative meaning of the poem and the equivalent representation or 'translations' of the visual aspects of the text. And it



is these visual aspects that contain the poetic sense of the text.

Heinl has already collaborated with Scharpenberg in 1995 with her publication of *Gegengaben und Widerworte*. "Partitur" is the German word for "score" and is used in music to describe a way of organizing voices of a composition on a music sheet. "Score" refers to all types of written ways to solidify a composition on paper. Heinl playfully creates sculptured, geometrical figures that remind us of scores whereas Scharpenberg uses words to create variations of that theme.

Statt Notenpapier

Wer muss denn auf Notenpapier
die Noten schreiben
wo doch Natur so viele
offene Flächen hat
durchsetzt mit Firsten und Stangen
...
mit Vogelfüßen
krallen die Töne sich an
es flattern die Kehlen im Takt
nach allerlei Arten
ganz stur
Moll oder Dur (21)

That is the beginning of one of the poems by Scharpenberg that sets the tone for the collection. By leaving out the actual musical notes, by creating empty spaces on the score sheet, by producing songs without notes, the reader and spectator is encouraged to fill in the empty spaces in Scharpenberg's poems and Heinl's collages and geometrical patterns.

Lyrical language, artistic word formations, and creative sound patterns are again combined in Scharpenberg's latest book of poetry. Even Scharpenberg's themes and images remain familiar. She divides her new collection of sixty poems into four categories: scores ("Partituren"), book marks ("Lesezeichen"), miscellaneous ("Und so weiter"), and waves-water-ocean ("Welle-Wasser-Meer"). Language, and time, both central themes in all of Scharpenberg's works, receive an additional dimension by adding the act of reading to her poems.

The first group of poems focus on form and sound; an awareness that a destruction of form can lead to new beginnings ("was tut ihr nun / ihr dürft jetzt selber spielen / vertagte Notenträger / mit Vergnügen / zerreisst und stückelt eure / leere Form / setzt sie dann ganz neu / und mit Bedacht zusammen / - Collagenwerk," 13-14). Frequent references to musical terms, scores, and sound reinforce the connection between the poems and the twelve black-and-white pictures that are used to illustrate the themes

of first twelve poems. One representative example of this blending technique can be found in the poems entitled "Statt Notenpapier," "Wassermusik," and "Zopfsong für Geige." The success of these poems is a result of Scharpenberg's direct language and lyric style that creates this new perspective through the usage of her language. A poem becomes enigmatic by the white space which surrounds it on the page, in the way a song has to appeal to the ear. Poetry must be musical, but must also please an inner ear.

The poems in the second segment center on the act of reading and book marks in general. Book marks are loosely connected items that are used to mark a certain spot within a book. Book marks are made of paper strips in "Leser" (61), a book cover itself, "Buchumschlag" (65), colored ribbons in "Eingebunden" (66-67), a letter in "Zweckentfremdet" (70), and a green leaf in "Grünes Blatt als Lesezeichen" (71-72).

The themes of the third section, "Und so weiter" are time and language, peace and tranquility, love, and adoration. Only two poems contain references to Scharpenberg's emigration status: "Reisesege: auch zum Auswandern gültig" (99-100) and "Vom Vorteil zweifacher Zugehörigkeit" (111-112). Interestingly enough the lyrical I in the first poem does not request a blessing for leaving a certain location, but wishes to return to the homeland: "Wohin / soll ich mich wünschen / wenn ich nach Hause will" (99). Being equally content and discontent in two different worlds provides little room for solid anchoring. The dilemma knows only one answer: the physical surroundings, the individual country is not as essential for the feeling of being at home and therefore the poem ends with the following lines:

...
Dort will ich immer
auf Tod und Leben
zu Hause sein
wo ich bin (100)

To belong to two worlds must not be a disadvantage, but rather creates an opportunity as in the poem "Vom Vorteil zweifacher Zugehörigkeit":

wer mich kennt
der weiss ja ich gehöre
fest ins eine
und ein weiteres Land

bin ich nicht in diesem
hält mich gerade das andere (111)

Belonging to two countries, one which gave you birth and tradition and the other which gave you a means of living, is seen as a privilege. In the light of such opportunity, neither a re-union with a country nor a farewell can therefore cause a lack of identity: "drum bedenkt / wir bleiben fest verbunden / ob ein Wiedersehen / bevorsteht oder / erst ein nächster / Abschied nah." (112)

The final section, entitled "Welle-Wasser-See" addresses Scharpenberg's favorite theme of longing not for a place or a country, but a certain type of place

where she can stay. The fluid image of waves and water are employed to express that feeling of constancy and destruction:

Geständig das Meer
ja
ich vernichte mich
Welle um Welle
ja
ich will bleiben
unbestattet
in ständiger Wiederkehr (122)

Scharpenberg's quiet, understated style fits her subject beautifully. In the poem "Gezeiten" she writes: ". . . und hörbar nur für mich / ein Prost auf den Mond / den Abendpartner / der Einsamen / bring ich die Wellen zum Klingen." (121) This perfectly self-contained image draws the reader into the poem, and makes the last line not just interesting but believable. By referring to sound again in the end cycle, Scharpenberg comes full circle in a book of poetry that started out with sound images. Anyone who has ever heard Margot Scharpenberg's own voice speak each word of the poem will find the experience of poetry even more superior. Although there are no recordings added to the collection, there is a brief biography on the poet and the illustrator, Annegret Heinel, as well as photos. This collection is simply a must for anyone who enjoys poetry.

The next volume by **Claudia Becker** approaches the idea of migration from one place to another in almost every poem of the collection entitled *StadtFluchten: CityEscapes*. Claudia A. Becker received the Robert L. Kahn Annual Poetry Award 2001 from TRANS-LIT, the literary journal of the Society for Contemporary American Literature in German, for her poem "Beobachtungen einer Buchenwald-Besucherin—1998" which is contained in the present volume. This book of poetry is now made available in a translated form. In 2004, three translators affiliated with the University of Cincinnati, Jerry Glenn, Renate Sturdevant, and Aine Zimmerman created an excellent side-by-side translation of twelve selected poems by Becker. The title *StadtFluchten (CityEscapes)* implies migration, a demographic structural development that might lead to an alternative lifestyle. The term *Stadtfluchten* usually refers to people leaving a city in search for a better, new, different lifestyle. The themes of the poems circle around finding the "true homeland," fate in "foreign lands," "philosophical observations" of love, the "experience of the

STADTFLUCHTEN
CITYESCAPES

SELECTED POEMS



Claudia A. Becker

Translated by Jerry Glenn,
Renate Sturdevant,
and Aine Zimmerman

American way of life," "German-American" life, the "meaning of homeland," the "adventure in foreign lands," and "the feeling of being 'the Other.'"

Anyone ever trying to translate a poem is faced with a problem: when the poetic meaning of the original is bound to the form it becomes impossible to translate the text as a whole. It is here that the translator must choose between translating the form, or translating the meaning. Throughout the volume of poetry, the three translators maintained the poetic sense of the work, by combining free translation (concentrating on the individual meaning as a whole) and at times focusing on the meaning of each individual lexical item. Translators have to make choices when to abandon the literal translation in favor of a more meaning oriented approach. One such example of a translation is the poem "Observations of a Buchenwald Visitor—1998" where the poetic sense of the work is maintained although the b-alliteration does not translate into the English.

<i>Beobachtungen einer Buchenwald-Besucherin—1998</i>	<i>Observations of a Buchenwald Visitor—1998</i>
Baracken unter Buchen... Bundeswehrler in Bussen... Betonstrasse über Boden –	Baracks under beeches... soldiers in buses concrete street over soil—
Begegnung mit dem Barbarischen: Blutiger Sport... blutige Arbeit... blutiges Spiel:	Encounter with the barbaric: bloody sport... bloody work... bloody game:
Ohne Belohnung. Ohne Bezahlung. Ohne Begleichung. (2)	Without reward. Without wages. Without salary. (2)

The translators showed the reader where some of the difficulties in translating such a poem lie: "No attempt was made to capture the hammering-and utterly untranslatable-repetition of the letter "B." (3) This is a good example to demonstrate how the quality of the poetry survives the transposition into English. The translators have not tried to reproduce the assonance of the first two lines" "Bundeswehrler in Bussen . . . /Betonstrasse über Boden . . ." This explanation can help the audience understand what aspects of the original poem the translators decided to translate and which aspects they chose to leave alone. In cases like this the bilingual reader appreciates the translation of the poem which is accompanied by the original work side-by-side in order to make sense. For some purposes, it is desirable to reproduce the linguistic features of a source and find the equivalents in another language.

In "Lähmendes Schweigen" the lines "wäre die Welt eine 'Tabula rasa', / wären . . . , / wäre . . . , / wären . . . ," (8) had to be translated as "if only the world were a tabula rasa, / if they were . . . , / if it were . . . , / if they were . . . ," (9) to be understood by an English-speaking reader. When poems offer a mix of English and German ("Verwandlung," "German-American,") or are written in English exclusively,

it becomes particularly challenging to maintain the original denotative and poetic meaning.

Poetry and translation have only very rarely intersected so strikingly as in the poem "German-American."

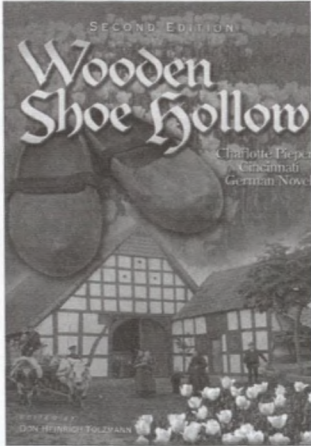
GERMAN(-)AMERICAN	GERMAN(-)AMERICAN
G wie Goethe, Ghetto, gaffen	G like Goethe, ghetto, gawk
E wie Einstein, Endlösung, ehren	E like Einstein, Endlösung, esteem
R wie Rosa Luxemburg, Recht, regeln	R like Rosa Luxemburg, rights, resolve
M wie Mauer, Meisterschaft, messen	M like Munich, mastery, measure
A wie Anstand, Andacht, arbeiten	A like Accord, activity, adore
N wie NATO, Neisse, nörgeln...	N like NATO, Neisse, nitpick...
(-)	(-)
A like August Wilson, Affirmative Action, alone	A wie August Wilson, Affirmative Action, allein
M like Martin Luther King, money, muscular	M wie Martin Luther King, mehr, muskulös
E like Einstein, eternity, eccentric	E wie Einstein, Ewigkeit, exzentrisch
R like Rumsfeld, rules, racial	R wie Rumsfeld, Regeln, rassistisch
I like Iraq, intervention, independent	I wie Irak, Intervention, individualistisch
C like Circus, challenge, chaotic	C wie Comics, Cash, chaotisch
A like Alert, aware, assertive	A wie Aufmerksam, aufgewacht, aufdringlich
N like Never-ending nervousness of a Neophyte...	N wie nicht-endende Nervosität eines Neulings...
(15)	(15)
	Translated by Jerry Glenn and Aine Zimmerman

Nowhere else but in this poems does a parallel text edition transform the reader's perception of the nature and function of the translation. Poems like these are culture-specific and the translator is now compelled to construct bridges between cultures that are far apart. In a sense the translated poem becomes a poem in its own right. Sometimes it is not the perfect correspondence between the original and the translation that makes for a good translation. In the case of the above-mentioned

poem, the translators evoke different images that could almost be variations to the same theme while re-creating the original.

M wie Mauer, Meisterschaft, messen	M like Munich, mastery, measure
A wie Anstand, Andacht, arbeiten	A like Accord, activity, adore

With a little bit more freedom, something closer to the original might be created. A good translation of a 'weaker' English poem is exemplified in "No More Questions Asked." (24-25) Here the original poem which was created in English seems less convincing than the translated German version.



What the reader interested in German-American contributions and materials is mostly interested in is to understand people divided by language and culture to communicate, and to enable the development of a mutually enriching interaction across the globe. This small volume by Claudia Becker, entitled *StadtFluchten: CityEscapes*, contributes to exactly that notion.

After reading *Wooden Shoe Hollow*, a historical novel that illustrates the German-American life in Cincinnati around the turn of the twentieth century, one has to agree that this book has been out of print too long. This book is a reprint of a historical Cincinnati German novel written by Charlotte Pieper in 1951. The colorful book cover shows a German immigrant family standing in front of a half-timber family home which is reminiscent of northern Germany as well as some parts of Cincinnati. Two wooden shoes or clogs, which were primarily a work shoe and appear to be roughly carved, dominate the picture. Readers can see the actual wooden shoe used in the design of the front cover of the book on display at the German Heritage Museum in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The novel, set in Wooden Shoe Hollow, a location on the northern edge of present-day Winton Place, illustrates the arrival of German immigrants to that rural, fertile area and documents their lives. The reader experiences the ups and downs of immigrant life through the main character, a young German woman, Rica Heber, who has emigrated from Osnabrück, Germany, and lived in this area around the turn of century. Already the first few sentences draw you into the story which describes actual people and real places:

Grossmutter Betz had come to Rica Heber out of the mist and smoke of a gray morning at the Osnabrück railway station. A tiny black bonnet was tied primly under her enthusiastic little chin. The word Amerika shuffled past her lips many times, but it was the first mention of the name which

drew Rita to her side with breathless expectancy. "You are going to America, too?" she asked. (13)

As this young girl learns the different customs in a new world and deals with her own history she left behind in Germany, the reader will understand how a town in Germany, Osnabrück, and a little farming community in Cincinnati can share a common bond.

The geographic location, *Wooden Shoe Hollow* in Cincinnati, is not merely used as a convenience for telling a story in some fanciful setting, but Cincinnati is portrayed in this rich historical novel as an essential part of the life of the time. The reader almost feels that he is living in that time period. The editor of this edition, Don Heinrich Tolzmann, contributed valuable background information to the novel. Much has been added to the current edition of 2004 if compared to the novel's first publication by the author, Charlotte Pieper, in 1951. Don Heinrich Tolzmann, long known as president of the German-American Citizens League of Greater Cincinnati and curator of its German-American collection, has included several major parts to the original novel in order to make the novel a true historic document of Cincinnati's German heritage. Readers of the re-published version have now access to many materials, such as historic maps that help researchers locate the places referred to in the novel in Germany and Cincinnati, 36 pictures of street signs, churches, relatives of Charlotte Pieper, the Pieper family home, German cemeteries. Genealogist might find the complete index to new materials useful and a page-locator note section of the story will illustrate lesser known terms or places found in the novel. Don Tolzmann even researched some names of the novel by looking up what was written about them in different newspaper articles of the time. What makes this historic novel even more interesting to today's reader is the information provided by Tolzmann about families who still live and work in greenhouses and flower shops in Wooden Shoe Hollow. Tolzmann points out in his introduction: "Today, many of the family businesses have made the transition from the vegetable to the garden business, and these are the places where many Cincinnati residents go to get flowers, plants, seeds, shrubbery, trees, garden equipment, etc."(xxviii). *Wooden Shoe Hollow*, which was once the gardening district of Cincinnati developed by German immigrants, is still today showing traces of that heritage. The city of Cincinnati was not just used as a backdrop for Charlotte Pieper's novel, but the city was described in detail to provide a vivid picture of what life might have been like in early Cincinnati history.¹

The true relevance of a historical novel is how it affects a particular reader. Following the publication and book signing of *Wooden Shoe Hollow* in April of 2004, a lively discussion and exchange of letters ensued about the significance of the novel. Residents of Wooden Shoe Hollow, pastors, and other residents of Cincinnati shared stories of that old German settlement and their German immigrant past. Even readers in Germany tried to obtain a copy of the book.² The re-publication of *Wooden Shoe Hollow* once again illustrates that the relationship between literature

and society is meaningful. If a book can motivate readers to discuss their own stories of how their families are connected to the area, it is worth the modest price.

¹ For more information about novels that used Cincinnati as a setting, see <http://www.cincinnati.library.org/booklists/?id=cincinnati-fiction>.

² <http://www.genesearch.com/queryview.htm>.

Elfe Vallaster-Dona

Stuart Friebert has always been a special case in German-American literature. His first four books, mainly poetry, were written in German and published between 1969 and 1975. Since then, more than half a dozen of poetry collections have come out in English, the most recent one titled *Near Occasions of Sin*, a relatively small volume, but in tone and attitude indicative of the mature author's philosophy and view of the world.

It may be noteworthy that Friebert, of Jewish background, went as a student to Germany not many years after the Holocaust. He spent most of his time in Darmstadt, where he took courses at the Technische Hochschule and the Pädagogische Institut (1949/50), but he also traveled to Austria and Switzerland. During those early postwar years, he established contacts and friendships with leading German authors of the time, among them the late Karl Krolow, whose poetry he translated into English. It will probably be fascinating to anyone concerned with things German to read about this period in Friebert's soon to be published memoirs.

The six-part collection *Near Occasions of Sin* reflects the author's skepticism of the *conditio humana* – a skepticism that expresses itself in irony and humor, sometimes in a laconic acceptance of the absurd. Often the poem becomes the vessel of anecdotes, working its way to a moral (and if there is no moral, the moral is that there is no moral). Friebert indulges in an easygoing, intentionally informal language that tries to pierce the essence of our existence and unveils a causality of which we have not yet been aware. One may be tempted to identify this approach as philosophic poetry or *Gedankenlyrik*. The narrative flow (enjambment without rhyme), so prevalent in contemporary American poetry, almost invites this classification.

Although small in its number of pages, this poetry collection spans a spectrum of themes and motifs. There are memories of a not necessarily idyllic family life with the dominant father figure, there are references to Jewish identity and German past, and again and again we find epigrammatic observations of fish and fishing and almost scientific descriptions of all kinds of animals. One sometimes wonders if the poet found solace in the animal world after experiencing the dubious value of human behavior.

It certainly would have been a sin not to convey those insights and to suppress the experiences from which they evolved because this oblivion comes easily from our general self-complacency. The poet (in this volume identical with the poetic persona,

the *lyrische Ich*) avoided those occasions, although he may have come near them (after all, he is human, too).

Ocean County College, New Jersey

Gert Niers

In der amerikanischen Gegenwartsliteratur gibt es keinen Autor, der sich so anhaltend und intensiv mit seiner deutschen Herkunft befasst hat, wie **Norbert Krapf**. Der aus dem ländlichen Süden Indianas stammende Lyriker, Erzähler, Herausgeber und Übersetzer hat die meiste Zeit seines beruflichen Lebens als Englisch-Professor auf Long Island, New York, verbracht, wo er zuletzt an der dortigen Universität das C.W. Post Poetry Center leitete. Seit Sommer 2004 lebt er mit seiner Familie in Indianapolis.

Krapf hat vor allem in der Lyrik immer wieder seine Identität als Deutschamerikaner thematisiert, allerdings nicht in sentimentaler oder chauvinistischer, sondern vielmehr in phänomenologisch beschreibender, vorsichtig konstatierender Weise. Mehrere seiner kurzen Gedichtsammlungen sind später zu größeren und leichter zugänglichen Ausgaben zusammengefasst worden. Zu nennen wären *Someewhere in Southern Indiana: Poems of Midwestern Origins* (St. Louis, Missouri: Time Being Books, 1993), *Blue-Eyed Grass: Poems of Germany* (im selben Verlag, 1997) und *Bittersweet Along the Expressway: Poems of Long Island* (Hardwick, Massachusetts: Waterline Books, 2000). In *The Country I Come From* setzt Krapf seinen literarisch-philosophischen Weg fort.

Bereits der Titel der dreiteiligen Gedichtsammlung macht deutlich, wie der Autor seinen Band verstanden wissen will: als Versuch der Selbstfindung und Selbstidentifikation des in eine bestimmte geographische Landschaft gestellten Individuums, wobei man das lyrische Ich weitgehend mit dem biographischen Autoren-Ich gleichsetzen darf. Wäre der Name aus historischen Gründen nicht so sehr belastet, könnte man Krapfs poetisches Unternehmen durchaus als *Heimatliteratur* bezeichnen, und zwar in einem ursprünglichen, ideologiefreien Sinn. Den Titel der Sammlung hat Krapf einem Lied Bob Dylans entlehnt, ohne weiterhin auf den Inhalt des Dylan-Songs einzugehen (Krapf, ein Bewunderer des Protestsängers mit dem ursprünglichen Namen Zimmerman, hat in diesen Band auch ein Gedicht über die Publikumswirkung Bob Dylans aufgenommen).

Bereits der erste Text (Prolog) stellt die Verbindung zur deutschamerikanischen Vergangenheit her. Dabei wird die Erinnerung durch ein Geruchserlebnis (ähnlich wie bei Proust durch ein Geschmackserlebnis) ausgelöst und holt die verlorene Zeit ein. Krapf setzt jedoch auch kritische Anmerkungen zur Kolonialgeschichte und bekundet Solidarität mit verfolgten und ausgebeuteten Minderheiten, etwa in "Mississinewa River Lament" und "Fire and Ice". Für den letztgenannten Text hat ihm 1999 in New York die *Poetry Society of America* ihren *Lucille Medwick Memorial Award* überreicht. Bemerkenswert sind auch die Betrachtungen zu Natur und Sprache, so die Idee der Sprachwerdung aus der der Natur ("The Language of Place", zugleich der Titel des ersten Teils der Sammlung). Die deutschen Romantiker und Walt Whitman haben hier Pate gestanden.

Es folgen weitere Naturbetrachtungen im zweiten Teil, der den Titel "When the House Was New" trägt und vor allem Szenen aus dem Landleben enthält. Der Leser

begegnet Leuten, die in einer kleinen, vorwiegend von deutschen Einwanderern bzw. deren Nachfahren bewohnten Enklave leben, aber durchaus in die größere Struktur, die Amerika heißt, integriert sind. Für diese Menschen (und anscheinend ihre Zeit) gibt es keinen Konflikt zwischen Deutsch und Amerikanisch. Krapfs Verdienst als Autor und Zeitzeuge besteht darin, dass er seine zumeist ethnisch gefärbten Erinnerungen naht- und widerspruchlos in die kollektive Erinnerung dessen, was Amerika und amerikanisch ist, einbringt. Diese Sehweise eröffnet auch neue Perspektiven für eine deutschamerikanische Literatur.

Wie der Titel "Odysseus in Indiana" ankündigt, enthält der dritte Teil der Sammlung Erinnerungen an verschiedene Rückkehr-Erlebnisse. Antike Mythologie findet ironischen Niederschlag in der Gestaltung des Gegensatzes von geruhsamem Landleben und anstrengendem Vorstadtleben (der Autor hatte bei Abfassung der Gedichte seinen Wohnort noch auf Long Island). Obwohl der ganze Band dem Andenken an die Mutter gewidmet ist, wird dieser Bezug erst im letzten Teil voll ausgearbeitet. Dem Verfasser gelingen liebevolle, eindringliche Porträts seiner alternden Mutter und anderer Familienmitglieder.

Krapfs Umgang mit seiner deutschamerikanischen Identität hat nie die Last jüngerer deutscher Vergangenheit ignoriert. Im Gegenteil: fern jeglicher Absicht, historische Zusammenhänge beiseite zu schieben oder zu verschleiern, hat sich der Angehörige des Jahrgangs 1943 immer wieder ein waches politisches Bewußtsein bewahrt. Das zeigte sich bereits in *Blue-Eyed Grass* und kehrt auch im jüngsten Lyrikband in dem auf den ersten Blick unscheinbar anmutenden Text "Dorothy and the Jewish Coat" wieder.

Die Sprache dieses Lyrikers ist einfach und ungekünstelt. Ihm kommt es eher auf distanziertes Understatement als auf flammende Rhetorik an. Krapf hat seine Texte einmal als Erzählgedichte bezeichnet, was auf die leichte Lesbarkeit der durchgehenden Zeilen und Strophen verweist. Insofern liegt Krapf voll im Trend amerikanischer Gegenwartslyrik. Man darf seinem für April 2005 angekündigten Gedichtband *Looking for God's Country* (wiederum bei Time Being Books) mit einiger Erwartung entgegensehen.

Ocean County College, New Jersey

Gert Niers

