



by Judith Kuckart
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Fiction

🏆 Shortlisted for the
Wilhelm Raabe Literature
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The World Between the News

Die Welt zwischen den Nachrichten

review

The World Between the News, the latest book by Judith Kuckart, is a playful and thought-provoking fictionalised memoir, which captures both Kuckart's own biography and the socio-political cornerstones of the last sixty years.

The World Between the News opens with the story of a woman who lives in the same town as the family of the young Judith. Before moving back to Germany, she lived in the USA with her husband and young son, where she met John F. Kennedy in a club on Capitol Hill and began an affair with him. The FBI suspected her of espionage, and she was told to leave the country. Kuckart relates this story before interrupting herself: 'Is that right? Is that stolen, made up, dreamt up, or did somebody once tell me that?'

This sets the tone for the book, which is always aware of the unreliability of memory and the blurred boundary between fiction and memoir. Divided into chapters just a few pages long, and occasionally interspersed with photos and short, wry poems, *The World Between the News* resolutely avoids a chronological structure, jumping back and forth in time, and delving not just into Kuckart's life but also those of the people around her.

The book has a wide-ranging focus. Much of it is a love letter to dance: an admirer of Pina Bausch, Kuckart was part of a feminist anarchist dance troupe in 1980s West Berlin. Other snippets cover

Kuckart's childhood, family history and relationships. Judith is born into a catholic family, who believe in both the virgin birth and in Rosa Luxemburg's suicide, but remains an only child due to her mother's thalidomide prescription. Her father, a salesman who later becomes a politician, is consistently unfaithful. When he dies many years later, it is his lover who tells Judith the news.

The political events that marked the second half of the twentieth century are never far away. Judith's childhood babysitter, for instance, is Ina Siepmann, who later joins the Red Army Faction, and was one of West Germany's most wanted terrorists by the early 1980s. Kuckart draws on Siepmann's teenage diaries to piece together what she can of her life.

Kuckart has a keen eye for observation and a gift for capturing characters. This engaging and immersive memoir will appeal to fans of Katja Oskamp's *Marzahn*, *Mon Amour* and Deborah Levy's autobiographies.

Find out more:

<https://www.dumont-buchverlag.de/buch/judith-kuckart-die-welt-zwischen-den-nachrichten-9783755810582-t-6031>

about the author



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Judith Kuckart, born in 1959 in Schwelm (Westphalia), is a writer and director and lives in Berlin. Her novel 'Lenas Liebe' (Lena's love) was published by DuMont in 2002, and made into a film in 2012. Her most recent publications are 'Kein Sturm, nur Wetter' (2019, published by Seagull in 2023 as 'No Storm, Just Weather', translated by Alexander Booth) and 'Café der Unsichtbaren' (2022). Judith Kuckart has been awarded numerous literary prizes and scholarships.

Previous works: *Lenas Liebe*, DuMont (2002); *Die Autorenwitwe*, DuMont (2003); *Kaiserstrasse*, DuMont (2006); *Die Verdächtigen*, DuMont (2008), *Wünsche*, DuMont (2013); *Dass man durch Belgien*

muss auf dem Weg zum Glück, DuMont (2015); Kein Sturm, nur Wetter, DuMont (2019); Café der Unsichtbaren, DuMont (2022).

Previous works translated into English: No Storm, Just Weather, Seagull Books (2023) Café of the Invisibles featured in NBG 2022, English rights sold.

Find out more: <https://judithkuckart.de/>

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