



by Norbert Gstrein  
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Fiction

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## The Years to Come

### *Die kommenden Jahre*

#### review

Set in the summer of 2016, *The Years to Come* is a topical novel about a struggling marriage which touches upon a wide range of contemporary issues.

Richard is a middle-aged academic and his wife, Natasha, is a writer. The couple live in Hamburg with their daughter. The novel opens at a conference of glaciologists in New York before the 2016 presidential elections, when the academics all claim they will flee to Canada if 'the worst happens'. Flight and escape become themes in the novel when Richard himself is offered a job in Canada. His marriage is at a low point and he lingers on in Canada to flirt with a Mexican colleague, while Natasha tells him that she has let out their holiday home to a Syrian refugee family, the Farhis. The novel goes on to focus on the Farhis' struggle to integrate into German life, supported by Natasha. It closes with three alternative endings, all involving Richard going to Canada to investigate the job offer, but with different outcomes for the Farhis.

The international scope of Norbert Gstrein's latest novel will cement its appeal to an English-language readership, striking a chord with fans of Zadie Smith and her latest book, *Swing Time*.

#### about the author

**Norbert Gstrein** was born in 1961 in Tyrol, Austria and now lives in Hamburg. He has been awarded the Alfred Döblin Prize and the Uwe Johnson Prize, among others. Hanser has published his novels

*Die Winter im Sudan* (2008), *Die englischen Jahre* (new edition 2008), *Das Handwerk des Totens* (new edition 2010), *Die ganze Wahrheit* (2010), *Eine Ahnung vom Anfang* (2013) and *In der freien Welt* (2016), several of which have been published in English translation.

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Carl Hanser Verlag (Germany)

Contact: Friederike Barakat

Tel: +49 899 983 0509

[friederike.barakat@hanser.de](mailto:friederike.barakat@hanser.de)

[www.hanser-literaturverlage.de](http://www.hanser-literaturverlage.de)