

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**DRAMATIC READING- *HINKEMANN* by ERNST TOLLER**  
Translated from German by **PETER WORTSMAN**.

**With Lauren Gregory, Matthew Ward & Ric Area Royer**  
From ***HINKEMANN* – a Tragedy by German Expressionist Playwright ERNST TOLLER**

**WITH Q&A, BOOK SIGNING & RECEPTION: SATURDAY, JANUARY 25 from 6:30—8:30 PM**

Press Release:

Join **Lichtundfire**, **Peter Wortsman** and the actors/readers **Lauren Gregory, Matthew Ward & Ric Area Royer** for a Dramatic Reading of Selections from ***HINKEMANN***, a tragedy, by German Expressionist playwright **Ernst Toller**, translated from the German by Peter Wortsman with Q&A, Book Signing and Reception. Peter Wortsman's has previously read from his Award Winning Novel *GHOST DANCE IN BERLIN (2013)* at Lichtundfire.

***HINKEMANN*** recounts the unthinkable, the fate of a man returned home from World War I with life altering injuries. As a love offering to his wife Grete and means of support, the desperate unemployed protagonist, Eugene Hinkemann, accepts a job as a carnival strongman, biting off the heads of live mice and rats. The play was first performed on September 19, 1923 at the Altes Theater, in Leipzig. Subsequent performances in Berlin and Vienna the following year demanded police protection, after a production in Dresden was disrupted by Nazi agitators incensed at the affront to German national honor.

**Ernst Toller** (1893-1939), as an enlisted soldier in the Kaiser's army in World War I, witnessed the horrors of the trenches first-hand and was seriously wounded. In 1919, Toller embraced revolutionary change and joined the leadership of the short-lived Bavarian Soviet Republic, serving for six days as president. He was tried for treason and sentenced to five years. In prison he completed several of his most powerful plays, including *Hinkemann*, establishing a reputation as one of the foremost German dramatists in the tradition of Jakob Lenz, Georg Büchner, and the young Bertolt Brecht. A high-profile persona non grata in 1933 when the Nazis came to power, Toller fled to London, and briefly tried his hand at screenwriting in Hollywood. Convinced that the world, as he knew it, had succumbed to the forces of darkness, he took his own life in 1939 in a New York hotel room.

**Peter Wortsman** (translator) is the author of two stage plays (*Burning Words*, premiered by the Hampshire Shakespeare Company in 2006, and in German translation at the Kulturhaus Osterfeld in Pforzheim in 2014, and *The Tattooed Man Tells All*, first staged by the Silverthorne Theatre in 2018); three collections of short fiction (*A Modern Way to Die*, 1991, second edition, 2019, *Footprints in Wet Cement*, 2017, and *Stimme und Atem/Out of Breath, Out of Mind*, 2019); a novel (*Cold Earth Wanderers*, 2014—short listed for the 2014 INDIEFAB Science fiction Book of the Year Award); an Independent Publishers Book Award-winning travel memoir (*Ghost Dance in Berlin*, 2013); as well as a book of doctors' profiles (*The Caring Heirs of Doctor Samuel Bard*, 2019). Wortsman is also a critically-acclaimed literary translator from the German into English of works by Adelbert von Chamisso, the Brothers Grimm, Heinrich Heine, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Franz Kafka, Heinrich von Kleist, Robert Musil, and Mynona, among others. He was a 1973 Fulbright Fellow, a 1974 Fellow of the Thomas J. Watson Foundation, and a 2010 Holtzbrinck Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin.

**Wortsman's** translation of ***HINKEMANN***, a tragedy, by Ernst Toller, is the first volume in a new series of German Plays in Translation, published by Berlinica Books. <http://www.berlinica.com/hinkemann.html>

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Contact: Priska Juschka, [info@lichtundfire.com](mailto:info@lichtundfire.com), Tel: 917-675-7835  
General Gallery Hours: Wednesday to Saturday 12 pm to 6 pm, Sunday 1pm to 6pm  
[www.lichtundfire.com](http://www.lichtundfire.com)

## ABOUT THE READERS:

**Matthew Ward** (director and reading the role of Grosshahn) is a translator, editor, and musician based in New York City and Berlin. He edits for MIT Press and translates from French, German, Spanish, and Italian. His translation of *Specters of Freud* by Viktor Mazin will be published by MIT Press in the summer.

His translation from the German of Peter Handke's play *Kaspar* premiered at Yale University in the autumn of 2016, followed by his translation of Handke's *Der Ritt über den Bodensee* in the spring of 2017. In addition to his translation and editorial work, Matt performs as a classical and jazz guitarist, leading several ensembles in New York and Berlin.

**Ric Area Royer** (reading the role of Hinkemann) is a performer of writing and a writer of performances. His upcoming play, *The Ram* - an auto-erotic psychological sci-fi thriller - will be touring roadside motels beginning in the Spring of 2020.

**Lauren Gregory** (reading the role of Grete) is a New York-based experimental musician from Pennsylvania whose compositions range from ambient, improvisational guitar music to intricate vocal loops. She likes to compose her lyrics by collaging fragments of her favorite German poems. Lauren frequently performs in an ensemble called Vervain with the guitarist and composer Matthew Ward.

## Concurrent with the Exhibition:

### **ABSTRACT GRAVITY**

**With Carol Boram-Hays, Vian Borchert, Leslie Ford, Mark Kurdziel and Jack Youngerman.**

**Abstract & Semi-Abstract Work in All Media Expanding Abstraction.**

**Concept by Priska Juschka.**

**Exhibition Dates: January 17 — February 9, 2020**

### Press Release:

**Lichtundfire** is pleased present a group exhibition in various media sculpture, painting and works on paper by 5 artists of different generations, and with practices reaching from abstraction to abstracted representation, while expanding the concept of abstraction.

What brings them together, in Lichtundfire's seasons opener, are their careful concepts and distinct treatments of their individual mediums on a predominantly small scale. These works, all deeply rooted in abstraction, attract each other through different concepts, and seem to gravitate from equal distance towards the same imaginary pole. (..)

Their techniques show aptitude on a small scale while their sizes create the intimacy necessary to convey/support a language that lays importance upon detail and accentuation. Even though the individual surface treatments differ and reach from bold brush strokes to mark-making, and from careful layering to sculpted abstractions with various materials—all work shows a sense of delicacy and thoughtful execution.

Every individual work in the exhibition demonstrates *gravitas*—pun intended—on a relative small scale. And, while coming from different artistic directions, each artist's practice creates a gravity that levitates and alleviates—attracting a common denominator that of 'abstract gravity'.

For more information, images on ABSTRACT GRAVITY, The Reading of *HINKEMANN*, or specifics on other events throughout of the exhibition, please contact Priska Juschka at [info@lichtundfire.com](mailto:info@lichtundfire.com), or via telephone 917-675-7835, or visit [www.lichtundfire.com](http://www.lichtundfire.com)

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