

**MANA**



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**A SPECIAL ISSUE ON 'FIRE & WATER'**

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**The Criminals of  
Ms A. Cycle of  
Songs**

I. Fire

*The triangle between the patient Ms A. (the art therapist, not the doctor, mind you) and the patient's „work of art“ is a relationship (of projection) that provides information on all three of them as well as on us ourselves, therefore on the role of art in itself. In the first song the patient's perspective prevails, in the second there is a stronger back and forth between the patient and Ms A., in the third Ms A.'s view is predominant.*

**1. Who asked Isaac? (The stone thrower)**

Who asked Isaac?  
In the name of the Lord

*(inarticulated sounds from material) en saak Ang el*

With you I feel  
like a human being  
He looks like you  
has a tender face  
Don't look so stern!  
Isn't the angel beautiful?

Aah aah Isaac!

It was a hot  
summer's day  
the eighteenth in a row  
a lot of hot days without sense  
on the motorway on the motorway  
father mother child father mother child  
I see the faces behind the window panes  
how they are laughing and enjoying themselves

To fly like an angel  
that will be Judgement Day

*(as to Ms A.)* They will punish me  
*(listens, as if he heard Ms A.'s words)*  
no, no, I'd like to be with you as well

The car fully packed  
a rubber dinghy on the roof  
the bikes on the back  
father mother child  
Who asked Isaac?  
How easily our fortune  
breaks  
someone has to warn them  
someone has to bite the dust

Abraham is willing  
to sacrifice his son, Isaa-aac  
the stone is heavy  
I am strong  
nineteen days so hot and senseless  
What about a piece of cake?  
What about a sip of tea?  
Who asked Isaac?

Then the angel appeared out of  
the thorn bush, the bush  
was burning without burning  
But who asked Isaac?  
father mother child  
so that others can understand  
how easily our fortune breaks  
our Lord is mighty, our God

he takes and he gives  
and my soul is

Jehova

*(voice flits about on its own, maybe without percussion)*  
father, father, no!  
But I feel nothing  
father, father, what is man  
No. I feel nothing!  
How they are laughing  
and enjoying themselves  
*(without words: motif father mother child: then:)* Where is the angel?  
*(building up into a crescendo, the moment before the throw)*  
I am Isaac  
father, no  
*(slaps his face three times/ the singer for real or the drums musically)*  
I am Isaac I am guilty  
you never asked me  
master over life and death  
*(either very loud or whispered)* father mother child  
*(only musically possible as well)* I throw the stone!

*(lonesome moment of the drums, into it):* Jehova!

*(calmly as if he is showing his picture to Ms A.)* Here is the angel  
the flames are flickering, look how beautiful  
he who appeared in the name of the Lord  
*(childlike)* he never asked Isaac

They will punish me  
I will ask you for it  
the angel is eaten by the flames  
I am guilty

I am Isaac  
it had to happen though

## 2. Firehead (a conversation)

*Relationship is mutuality*  
Martin Buber, *I and Thou*

*The following piece could be sung by two persons. Ms A. (left) and the patient (right) who are now played by a singer. It is conceivable that the cello player speaks some words or with certain words stands in the foreground (middle), while the words of the singer are sung or spoken as by a third person. In the rage the longing for love (and its impossibility) should resonate as well as the affection of Ms A.*

Ms A.

*Patient*

I love the fire  
when it burns  
when it crackles,  
glows and smoulders

But the fire is a thief

The flames jump over the roof  
the crowd runs closer

when the blaze jumps higher

the flames are blazing  
It must be a great fire!!

A thief  
who howls and  
goes from house to house

without neighbours  
and  
whole in himself\*

blazing burning

*(joyful)*  
now the beams are bursting  
the roof, it breaks  
it is pure fury

Fire is no thing  
that speaks!

forbidden      I am so hot

oh how big  
my lust is growing  
oh how hot  
it is forbidden

hot  
hot  
hot

he is really  
quite a handsome guy

hot

hot

And the child?  
And the tree?  
without roots  
you have painted it  
without roots

child is dead  
hahaha

how I crave for you  
hahaha  
that is the flower of the fire  
red orange and in the middle  
blue, gloriously clear and cold

red orange and in the middle  
blue, gloriously clear and cold  
an icy sapphire

the flower of the fire

*(by singer with love and defiance  
depersonalized at the same time)*

kindling  
kindling  
smouldering  
flickering  
laughing

glowing

how I crave for you  
crave for you

isn't he  
a handsome guy

how it consumes me  
you can't put it out  
can't put it out  
this blazing light

torched five shacks  
a supermarket  
lashes out  
if you come nearer  
they all are nothing

in the middle, the flame  
a clear straight blue

a child

fire destroys

fire and the wind are brothers

*(whistles like the wind)* ffffsst

and when it abates?

and when it abates?

I am to  
paint like a child

a child

the coloured match box  
Mother gave the sticks to me  
the tiny heads so pretty  
when you  
light them

her lips were red  
what a tiny head  
when it burns

*(as in thought, casually)*  
fire brings new things

she never embraced

never

I start anew

I start anew

\*This is a quote from Martin Buber: "If I face a human being as my 'Thou, and say the primary word I-Thou to him, he is not a thing among things, and does not consist of things. This human being is not He or She, bounded from every other He and She, a specific point in space and time within the net of the world ; nor is he a nature able to be experienced and described, a loose bundle of named qualities. But with no neighbour, and whole in himself, he is 'Thou and fills the heavens."  
*(taken from Ronald Gregor Smith' translation, I and Thou)*

### 3. Ballad of the Tiger Man

*In the third piece the piano becomes a partner, the Tiger man*

Unstable, restless and brutal  
fuzzy, soft and disastrous

You wrap me round your finger  
at night you sit by my bedside  
whisper voodoo and then

Come on Ms A.  
When are we catching fire?

You paint yourself as a tiger  
the stripes bilious green  
Voodoo  
sired in violence  
I see you roam  
through voodoo

you can talk  
a proper charmer  
but if you want to  
you become another  
unstable, restless and brutal

your glossary of love  
knows killing only  
when you burst out of darkness  
the jump  
of love

I see you light blue, yellow shades  
of dazzling beauty, ever so sophisticated  
I hold your mouth so tenderly  
as long as a deep dream  
your eyes so shining dark

What you cannot explain,  
makes man a man

your voice is gentle  
you move lightly  
voodoo

it was in the street  
she came very near you  
a knife in your hand

you have loved her

and now she is dead and gone

instable, fuzzy and disastrous

**Tanja Langer**, born in 1962 Wiesbaden, is a writer from Berlin. Among narratives and several novels, such as „*Der Tag ist hell, ich schreibe dir*“ (2012) or on painter Edvard Munch, “*Der Maler Munch*” (2013), she published the novella “*Wir sehn uns wieder in der Ewigkeit: Die letzte Nacht von Henriette Vogel und Heinrich von Kleist.*”

She also writes for artists and composers, such as the opera libretto, *Kleist*, music by Rainer Rubbert (2008). In 2016, she founded the multilingual publishing house , Bübül Verlag Berlin.

Her latest novel is set during the British occupation of Germany after WWII and in the world of the cinema “*Meine kleine Großmutter & Mr. Thursday oder Die Erfindung der Erinnerung*” (mdv, 2019).