

Presentation and Discussion

## Esther Dischereit

Monday, October 31, 6:30pm  
(GISB 4067)



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### *Flowers for Otello: On the Crimes of Jena Blumen für Otello: Über die Verbrechen von Jena*

Dedicated to the families of the nine people who were killed in a series of racist murders committed by the so-called National Socialist Underground, NSU, in 2000-2007. The perpetrators could commit these acts over many years with the help of a broad circle of friends and supporters in East as well as West Germany, and due to the failure of state authorities to investigate the racist motif at hand. The scandal of this failure has received a lot of media attention in Germany since the eventual discovery of the NSU in 2011, and in conjunction with the (ongoing) trial that started in Munich in 2013. Esther Dischereit started to write about these crimes as soon as they were discovered. The resulting work, which will be the basis of Dischereit's presentation, uniquely combines a libretto, drama, songs of lamentation and research material. It was first premiered in 2014 by DeutschlandRadio Kultur, Germany's most important radio station, and then published as a book.

The presentation will be in English, with a few original German soundbites.

ESTHER DISCHEREIT, described by her publisher, Suhrkamp Verlag, as "possibly the preeminent German-Jewish voice of the post-Shoah generation", was born in Germany in 1952 and lives in Berlin. She has published fiction, poetry and essays, as well as plays for radio and the stage. Her major works include *Joëmi's Tisch – Eine jüdische Geschichte* [Joëmi's Table – A Jewish Story] (Suhrkamp in 1988; *Merryn* [Merryn] (Suhrkamp, 1992), two volumes of essays *Übungen jüdisch zu sein* [Exercises in Being Jewish] (Suhrkamp, 1998) and *Mit Eichmann an der Börse* [With Eichmann at the Stock-Exchange] (Ullstein, 2001), as well as the volumes of poetry *Als mir mein Golem öffnete* [When My Golem Opened to Me] (Karl Stutz, 1997), and *Im Toaster steckt eine Scheibe Brot* [There's A Slice of Bread in the Toaster] (Vorwerk 8, 2007). Esther Dischereit is the founder of the avant-garde-project WordMusic and has worked as a curator for various projects in contemporary art/new media. Esther has received many prizes for her work, including the Erich Fried Prize in 2009. She is currently Professor of Language Arts at the University of the Applied Arts in Vienna.

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