

THE ACTOR AS PAINTER

CRITICAL FABLE: ARMIN MUELLER-STAHN DRAWS “THE BLUE COW”

Armin Mueller-Stahl turned his back on socialism and became a star in the West. Although his politically critical song “The Blue Cow” is more than a half-a-century old, it hasn’t lost any of its expressive power. Now, Hatje Cantz is publishing a booklover’s version of this title, ornamented with handwritten text and lovingly constructed drawings by this exceptional artist.

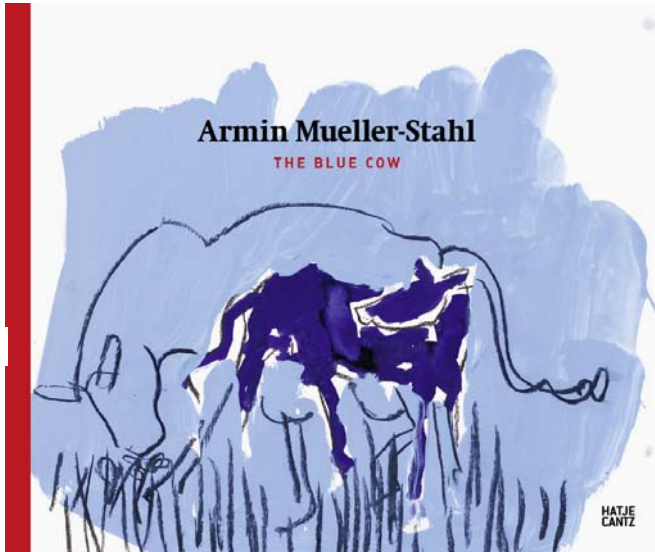
Berlin, November 25, 2016 – Whether in acting, music, writing, or painting, Armin Mueller-Stahl (*1930) is a creative multitalent. Due to his subversive activities against the state, he was forbidden to work for several years as an actor in East Germany, so he turned to music. His lyrics are like fables: in coded metaphors Mueller-Stahl expressed what he wasn’t permitted to say openly. His messages can be found in between the lines. The quirky song, “The Blue Cow” was especially popular. In it, a headstrong cow first drinks her own milk, and finally drinks herself dry. The functionaries were suspicious: was Mueller-Stahl saying that the Socialist Party was destroying itself? Or that the country itself was dissolving? “The authorities didn’t like my songs,” said the artist, “but the public did.” In one of his concerts, Mueller-Stahl rephrased some lines, changing *da wurde sie ganz klein und hager* (“then she became very small and haggard”) into *da wurde sie ganz klein wie Hager* (“then she became very small, like Hager”), referring to the Central Committee member Kurt Hager; after this, what he meant was finally clear. It was suggested to Mueller-Stahl that he no longer perform the song, and in 1980, he was given an exit visa.

In the West, Mueller-Stahl continued his acting career. In just a few years he made it from Berlin to Hollywood; among the many honors he’s earned along the way are an Honorary Bear from the Berlinale, the Golden Camera and the Romy for his life’s work, and an Oscar nomination.

His last great film roles are now a few years in the past, and Mueller-Stahl doesn’t feel drawn to the camera any more. Instead, the multitalent is appearing more frequently in the public eye with his sophisticated drawings, paintings, and prints. “When you’re drawing, you’re the director. Nothing is forbidden, and you have every freedom,” rhapsodizes Mueller-Stahl, who’s been painting and drawing throughout his life. He simply didn’t pay any mind to the genre, because it was always “so easy” for him. Armin Mueller-Stahl has presented his work in many exhibitions, and now, it’s in a special booklover’s edition. *The Blue Cow* is the first publication to fuse Mueller-Stahl’s talent as a painter with his work as a songwriter: twenty lovingly made watercolors and charcoal drawings tell the story of the popular “blue cow,” and reflect the lyrics handwritten by Mueller-Stahl.

“The idea for this artist’s book came from the artist himself,” says Hatje-Cantz publisher Cristina Steingraber. “In 2014 we published an impressive book celebrating Armin Mueller-Stahl’s eighty-fifth birthday, and we’re pleased to be able to work with him again this year.”

The Blue Cow is being released in a convenient size of 25 x 31 cm and will make a remarkable little Christmas gift.



**ARMIN MUELLER-STAHL
THE BLUE COW**

Edited by Frank-Thomas Gaulin
English
2016. ca. 40 pp., ca. 20 ills.
24.30 x 20.50 cm
hardcover
ISBN 978-3-7757-4255-9

19,80 EUR

ABOUT HATJE CANTZ

Hatje Cantz is a groundbreaking international publishing company specializing in art, architecture, and photography. Since 1945 Hatje Cantz has been using its profound expertise and enthusiasm for craftsmanship to produce and publish books of the highest quality. We currently release around two hundred new titles annually.

Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION GERD HATJE as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

www.hatjecantz.de
www.editiongerdhatje.com

PRESS CONTACT

Sara Buschmann
Head of Press Department
s.buschmann@hatjecantz.de
Tel. +49 30 3464678-08

Jennifer Berndt
Junior PR-Manager
presse@hatjecantz.de
Tel. +49 30 3464678-23

**HATJE
CANTZ**