

Brigitte Schär

Swiss author, singer and performer



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Biography

Brigitte Schär (2/1/58) grew up in Meilen on Lake Zurich and now lives in Zurich, Switzerland. She studied German Language and Literature and European Folk Literature and completed a degree program for voice and speech. After her studies at the bachelor level, Ms. Schär worked for several years as a German teacher and did studio voice recording work for the blind. At the same time, she began making more and more public appearances as both a singer and an artistic performer. Since 1988, she has been working as a freelance writer and singer.

Brigitte Schär writes books for both adults and children and has been awarded numerous prizes. As a singer she has performed in a variety of countries (e.g. Sudan, Lebanon, the US), accompanied by international artists. While in Beirut in 1996, she recorded her CD "Vocal Flight to Beirut", a work which traverses the boundaries between jazz, vocal improvisation, ethno, chanson, and pop.

As an artistic performer, Ms. Schär has been involved in many multi-media projects in the areas of dance, theater, video, and film and went on tour. As both a writer and an artist, Ms. Schär creates an original and extraordinary linking of her own literary work to her work as a performer. The result: theatrical "reading-performances" and "concert-readings" for both adults and children.

Today Brigitte Schär is invited as a solo-performer into the whole world. U.S.A, Canada, Ecuador, Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, India. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Belarus, Taiwan, Lebanon....

Awards

Swiss Young Adult Literary Prize, 1993; Commissioned for a work by the Swiss Cultural Foundation Pro Helvetia, 1995; Schnabelsteher Prize, 1997; Children's Literature Award Northrhine-Westfalia, 1997; Grant for Artist in Residence at the KünstlerInnenhaus Wiepersdorf Palace, Mark Brandenburg, 1997; IBBY List of Honor, 1998; Children's and Young Adult's Media Prize "Die rote Zora", 1999; Cultural Award of the Canton of Zurich (specialized area: adult literature), 1999; Selected to participate in competition: Ingeborg Bachmann Prize for Literature in Klagenfurt, Austria, 2001; Nomination for the German Young Adult Literature Prize, 2002. Commissioned for a work by the Swiss Cultural Foundation Pro Helvetia, 2004. Luchs 226 (by the newspaper „Die Zeit“ and Radio Bremen), 2005 for „Die Weihnachts-Show“. Highly varied diplomas "Best Books".

Brigitte Schär's books have been translated into 12 languages, including Chinese, Korean, and Portuguese. To date, "The Blind Fairy" has been translated into English (published by North-South Books, Inc., illustrations by Julia Gukowa.). Several books were adapted for theaterplays or radio emissions. Several of her children's books are illustrated by Jacky Gleich. Her two last books are illustrated by Andersen-Award-winner Jörg Müller and Verena Ballhaus.

Book and CD Publications

for children and adults : **Das Schubladenkind** (Geschichten), Nagel & Kimche, 1988 und dtv 2003 **Das geht doch nicht!**, Hanser, 1995 und dtv, 2000 **Monsterbesuch!**, Hanser, 1996 **Das Haus auf dem Hügel**, Hanser, 1998, **Die blinde Fee**, Nord-Süd, 1998, English translation „The Blind Fairy“, North-South Books Inc., 1998 **Die Entführung der Welt** (Roman), Hanser, 2000 **Mama ist gross wie ein Turm**, Hanser, 2001, **Die Weihnachts-Show**, Sauerländer by Patmos, Düsseldorf 2005 **Geschichten vom Roll und vom Ruh**, Bajazzo Verlag, Zürich 2006, **Dinosaurier im Mond**, Sauerländer 2009, **CD Rundherum**. Musik-CD und CD-ROM. Grenzland Produktion, 2002

for adults only: **Auf dem hohen Seil**, Geschichten, eFeF, 1991 **Liebesbriefe sind keine Rechnungen**. Stories, Hanser, 1998 **CD Vom Fliegen und Wildschweinjagen**, Literaturvertonung, Grenzland Produktion, 2001. **CD Vocal Flight to Beirut**, COD/HearWeGo, 1996 **CD Liebe Frau Bär**, Grenzland Produktion (short CD)

Quotes from Newspaper Reviews

“Texts of rare literary quality and narrative power that masterfully take up the tradition of the fairy tale but whose linguistic economy, vividness, and musicality are unmistakably modern.” Neue Zürcher Zeitung

“The singer’s voice can do anything: fly, dance, cry, laugh, dream, pound. (...) An entrancing speech-, song- and sound-performance of great wit and charm, in which a dialogue between death and life finds a home along with a wild boar hunt and a children’s tango.” Süddeutsche Zeitung

“One is reminded of C.G. Jung’s archetypes.” Berliner Morgenpost

“Simple/unadorned stories of breathtaking unpredictability. And yet arising out of ordinary, workaday life.” Berner Zeitung

With her grotesque picture stories and cleverly weird fairy tales, Brigitte Schär has become the rising star in the Swiss children’s literature heavens.” Neue Zürcher Zeitung

“Brigitte Schär is an amazingly talented artist. She reads, sings and stages her stories with charm and incomparable vitality and, like an oriental storyteller, casts a spell over her listening audience.” Zürichsee-Zeitung

“Brigitte Schär plays most masterfully with surrealistic phantasies. She is a modern storyteller who carries us off into a magical world between waking and sleeping where one is never quite sure if one should long for or fear it.” Süddeutsche Zeitung

About the individual works

Dinosaurier im Mond (Dino in the Moon) „What I like best is for all of us to stay round the table after supper’s over, telling stories.“ ‘All of us’ being Lucy, the main character, complete with imaginary dog, as well as Mum and Dad, and sister and brother. The various stories tell about a dragon putting Mum to flight; about the teacher turning into a rhino; about socks going AWOL; about Granny, whom Lucy spirits onto a trapeze, turning her into a fairground attraction; about Lucy, who all of a sudden knows how to drive a car and who gets through her mother’s daily workload in seconds flat; well, yes, and about a Sunday afternoon jaunt to outer space. A book that offers fun galore for the whole family. "Witty and wonderfully different, philosophical and wise." Frankfurter Rundschau

Die Weihnachts-Show (The Christmas Show) One morning the Easter Bunny stands at the calendar maker's door and explains that he would like to swap jobs with Baby Jesus. He doesn't see why Baby Jesus should always get to have the best holiday in the year for himself... Shortly before Christmas the Easter Bunny arrives in the big city. As usual, the great Christmas Show is to be shown live on TV, the same as every year. Everything is ready: the manger, the shepherds, the ass the ox. The star drifts across the studio sky and bathes the scene in an unearthly light. And then the worldwide audience has the chance to marvel at Baby Jesus with long ears, in close-up. The audience is completely dumbfounded by his appearance. No one has ever seen a Christmas show like this one!

Geschichten vom Roll und vom Ruh (Stories of the Roll and the Rest)

The stories of the Roll and the Rest tell us about friendship, love and dispute between two scurrile, fantastic beings who are no humans but acting and feeling like humans. Roll is loud and full with temperament, Rest is gentle, dreamy and a bit timid. Together they watch a thunderstorm, bake a cake, roll down a hill, go for journeys, cuddle, are happy, unhappy and at the end, they even want to go apart. But this will not succeed ... Fifteen poetic stories about the joy and the suffering of being together.

Mama ist so gross wie ein Turm (Mom is big as a Tower): Mama is gigantic, beloved and strong but, unfortunately, far away. But when she finally does arrive, she lifts up the whole school house and carries it from country to country... a picture story about a child's love and need for her mother.

Die Entführung der Welt (The Kidnapping of the World): In a huge cave world, Lena gets caught in the struggle between the one-eyed giants and the magical cave-dwellers. Whether she can solve the conflict or even decipher the secret of the kidnapped globe remains to be seen...

Das geht doch nicht! (You can not do that!): The littlest one in the family was always a bit different from the others, and of course, she always had a mind of her own. Barricaded in the living room, she sat down with a pile of wood and worked day and night on a present for the family. The result went beyond their wildest expectations.

Monsterbesuch (Visit of the Monsters!) Twenty rude and boorish monsters in the living room all at one time. The only one who can keep the peace is the unflappable narrator, who also happens to be one of the youngest in the house. She mediates between the monsters, the police, the fire department, and the horrified family. A story about courage and tolerance.

Das Haus auf dem Hügel (The House on the Hill): The same beginning to the story 13 times: A ball rolls down a hill. A little girl runs after it, but the ball disappears. The search begins, and the little girl discovers the world. Magical stories about growing and growing up.

Das Schubladenkind (The Child in the Tray): At the top of a tower, a curious little frog runs into a stork who answers all of the frog's pressing questions... There is no more room for the great big hulking child in his own home... The little toothpick tries to help a fickle friend, the arrogant pipe cleaner. In these short, concise stories, the logic of fairy tales rules; they are imaginative and full of surprises.

Die blinde Fee (The Blind Fairy): "Everything has been done up the way you wanted", say the dwarves in a disguised voice. They pretend to be good servants, but in reality the

palace is falling apart. The fairy is the only one who doesn't notice anything because she is blind. Only when she talks to an old woman one day in the woods are the fairy's eyes opened. Armed with courage and confidence in her own strength, she returns to the palace and bans the dwarf ghosts.

Rundherum (All around): Music-CD and CD-ROM: An interactive journey through Brigitte Schär's children's books and sassy songs. In collaboration with musician Manuela Keller, and multi-media producer Kathrin Hug.

Auf dem hohen Seil (On the High Wire): Strange things happen in these stories. Weird events force the nameless figures to confront, above all, the difficulties of finding themselves and finding each other. Concisely and precisely formulated, the story is comprised of events that escalate quietly but continuously, reflected in language that varies ever so slightly.

Liebesbriefe sind keine Rechnungen (Loveletters are no Bills): At breakfast a rat is sitting in the breadbasket. That unpleasant scene is the beginning of a strange friendship. And it is a strange passion for music that overcomes the young man in front of his piano with the key-cover closed, that pushes him into marriage, and drives him in the end to a bloody act of desperation. The stories take place in a magical realm between waking and sleeping where one is never quite sure if one should run to or from it.

CD Vom Fliegen und Wildschweinjagen (About Flighing and Boarhunting): Brigitte Schär sings her literary work. There are 16 literary songs in collaboration with musician Manuela Keller: a lullabye, a rap, then the sound of a chorale, like a melancholy prayer or a cry of joy.

CD Vocal Flight to Beirut: 11 songs in the no man's land between jazz, vocal improvisation, ethno, chanson, and pop. In 1996, Brigitte Schär spent one month in Beirut and recorded this CD in collaboration with the Dutch musician Trudy Raymakers, Haissam Salah Eddine, and other Arab musicians.

CD Liebe Frau Bär (Dear Mrs. Bear):

3 songs about the business of literature. Who reads all the books produced every year? The first song explores this question. Mrs Bear has written a book, now she send it to the editors and gets answers back. That is the question of the second song. And the third song: Bookseller Hans is a mystery man. He wants to write a book for the woman he secretaly admires. She passes by his shop daily. If necessary, he would force her to listen to him and to read his book.



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