

Veranstalter	Verena Keidel
Thema	The Magic Of Madness. The Scottish Writer John Burnside (AA-A2, ENG-6, ENG-6a, AA10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-W, AA-WB)
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II (Seminar Ib für Studierende mit Zulassung vor WS 14/15)
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-543
Zeit	Die 16-18
Raum	1219
Beginn	18. Oktober 2016

In this seminar, you will be introduced to the literary oeuvre of Scottish novelist, thinker and poet John Burnside. Our main set texts will be Burnside's novels *The Dumb House* (1997) and *Glisters* (2008). *The Dumb House* is a gruesome, autodiegetic narrative about an experiment conducted by the deviant scientist-figure Luke: Inspired by tales about the isolation experiment of the emperor Akbar the Great, Luke locks his own children in the eponymous 'dumb house' in order to prove the theory that language is innate. Also *Glisters* is not something for the faint-hearted. Its plot revolves around the eerie disappearance of several



young boys in an post-industrial village called Innertown. Addressing issues such as social depravation, personal grief and environmental pollution alike, *Glisters* has been variously labelled "existential thriller", "horror novel" as well as "ecological crime fiction".

Further reading will include shorter prose texts taken from the acclaimed short story collections *Burning Elvis* (2000) and *Something like Happy* (2013) as well as (at least excerpts of) one of Burnside's compelling memoirs: In *Waking up in Toytown* (2010), Burnside recalls personal experiences of mental instability and drug abuse. If time permits, we will also engage with some of Burnside's prize-winning poetry collections.

Students are requested to have obtained a copy of *Glisters* and *The Dumb House* by the beginning of the semester. Further texts will be announced. Critical literature and theoretical texts will be provided via AGORA. All participants are expected to have read *The Dumb House* by October 18.

Studienleistung: active participation (no more than two missed classes), thorough preparation of all texts; completion of homework assignments, oral presentation

Prüfungsleistung: term paper (2000–3000 words)

