

Ghost Dance in Berlin: A Rhapsody in Gray (Travelers' Tales)

Peter Wortsman



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Every great city is a restless work in progress, but nowhere is the urban impulse more in flux than in Berlin, that sprawling metropolis located on the fault line of history. A short-lived fever-dream of modernity in the Roaring Twenties, redubbed Germania and primped up into the megalomaniac fantasy of a Thousand-Year Reichstadt in the Thirties, reduced in 1945 to a divided rubble heap, subsequently revived in a schizoid state of post-World War II duality, and reunited in 1989 when the wall came tumbling down -- Berlin has since been reborn yet again as the hipster hub of the 21st century. This book is a hopscotch tour in time and space.

Part memoir, part travelogue, *Ghost Dance in Berlin* is an unlikely declaration of love, as much to a place as to a state of mind, by the American-born son of German-speaking Jewish refugees. Peter Wortsman imagines the parallel celebratory haunting of two sets of ghosts, those of the exiled erstwhile owners, a Jewish banker and his family, and those of the Führer's Minister of Finance and his entourage, who took over title, while in another villa across the lake another gaggle of ghosts is busy planning the Final Solution.

Ghost Dance in Berlin was the recipient of a Silver 2014 Independent Publishers Book Award.



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