

Goethe-Institut New York
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JON CHO-POLIZZI WINS 2024 HELEN & KURT WOLFF TRANSLATOR'S PRIZE

New York, NY (August 22, 2024) – The Goethe-Institut is pleased to announce Jon Cho-Polizzi, translator of *De-Integrate: A Jewish Survival Guide for the 21st Century* by Max Czollek (Restless Books), as the winner of the 2024 Helen & Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize.

The winner was determined by a jury of three with an expertise in German literature and translation, consisting of Shelley Frisch (chair), Elisabeth Lauffer, and Philip Boehm. In their statement, the jury said:

“We congratulate Jon Cho-Polizzi, whose marvelously confident rendering introduces English-speaking readers to a fresh and powerful voice with a vital message. Max Czollek’s reflections on Germany’s past, present, and potential future, as the country reckons with rising antisemitism, xenophobia, and racism, urges minoritized communities in Germany not to buy into the promise of assimilation as defined by the dominant culture— all too eager to shed its past—and to stop participating in a kitsch-filled memory culture, but instead to adopt a stance of resistance and embrace “otherness” while striving to forge a truly pluralistic society; hence the title *De-Integrate*.

Cho-Polizzi’s crackling, punchy language brilliantly takes up the challenge of the book’s many shifts in register (theoretical, academic, critical, colloquial), tone (sardonic and humorous to reflective and personal), and form (poetry, rap lyrics, newspaper/journal articles, speeches, statements). His buoyant prose, which manages to read both effortlessly and invitingly, captures the flavor of the original as it conveys issues of urgent current interest. His sparkling presentation extends even to the translator footnotes. Max Czollek’s book, in Jon Cho-Polizzi’s resplendent translation, is sure to linger in readers’ minds for a long time to come.”

Jon Cho-Polizzi is Assistant Professor of German at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He was born and raised in Northern California and received his PhD in German and Medieval Studies from UC Berkeley after studying Literature, History, and Translation in Santa Cruz and Heidelberg. His literary translations highlight the polyphony of contemporary German-language literature. Jon lives and works between Michigan, California, and Berlin.

DATE

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The award will be presented at [a prize ceremony held at the Goethe-Institut New York on October 1](#). Shortlist finalists included Jonathan Franzen and Jenny Watson for their translation of *The Short End of the Sonnenallee* by Thomas Brussig, published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Tess Lewis for her translation of *On the Marble Cliffs* by Ernst Jünger, published by New York Review Books; Greg Nissan for their translation of *War Diary* by Yevgenia Belorusets, published by New Directions; Simon Pare for his translation of *Love in a Time of Hate* by Florian Illies, published by Riverhead Books; and Peter Wortsman for his translation of *The Golden Pot and Other Tales of the Uncanny* by E.T.A. Hoffmann, published by Archipelago Books.

The Helen & Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize is supported by the Friends of Goethe New York, the Frankfurter Buchmesse, and the German Consulate General New York.

Established in 1996 and newly funded by the Friends of Goethe New York, the Helen & Kurt Wolff Prize honors an outstanding literary translation from German into English published in the USA/Canada the previous year. The prizewinning translator receives \$5,000 as well as a fully funded trip to the Frankfurter Buchmesse.



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New York

For more information, please visit www.goethe.de/us/helenandkurtwolffprize.

The **Goethe-Institut** is Germany's cultural institute and is active worldwide with six institutes in the USA. Since 1969, the Goethe-Institut New York has promoted knowledge of the German language and fostered intercultural dialogue between the USA and Germany. With its translation grant program, two annual translator prizes, and a German language library open to the public, the Goethe-Institut New York facilitates German-American cultural exchange.

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