



Invitation

Friday, 6 July 2018, 6 pm

Intimate Strangers: Balcony Love in Karachi, Then and Now

Lecture by **Bilal Tanweer** (Lahore, Pakistan)

Event in cooperation with:

internationales literaturfestival  **berlin**

Venue

Zentrum für Literatur-
und Kulturforschung (ZfL)
Schützenstraße 18
10117 Berlin



In this presentation, Bilal Tanweer will read out two excerpts where intimacy between strangers is established through non-verbal gestures across apartment balconies. The first is from his translation of the 1964 Urdu humorous novel, *Love in Chakiwara and Other Misadventures (Chakiwara Mein Visaal)* by Muhammad Khalid Akhtar (Forthcoming, Picador India). The second excerpt is from his novel-in-progress.

In the Pakistani megacity Karachi women's movement is often guarded and there are many social barriers to free interaction between men and women who are outside of family. By way of these excerpts, Tanweer will highlight the balcony as a space that allows by virtue of its location – inside and outside – a subversion of these controls and allows initiation of contact/ intimacy with strangers. Since the two works Tanweer has chosen are situated five decades apart, they implicitly make an argument for the persistence of social barriers to free interaction between men and women, and also point to the enduring practices that serve to unsettle them.

Bilal Tanweer is an author and a translator. His debut novel *The Scatter Here Is Too Great* (Random House) won the Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize and was shortlisted for the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature and the Chautauqua Prize. The novel was translated into German as *Die Welt hört nicht auf* (Hanser, 2016) and in French as *Le monde n'a pas de fin* (Editions Stock, 2014). Tanweer's translation of Muhammad Khalid Akhtar's *Love in Chakiwara and Other Misadventures* (PanMacmillan, 2016) received the PEN Translation Grant. His writings have appeared in local and international magazines including *Granta*, *The New York Times*, *Dawn*, and *The Caravan*. He lives and teaches in Lahore, Pakistan.

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