



Foto: Lena Pasternak

## Annual Report 2022

## Introduction

“... There is a war going on in our country, so we lost our jobs and earnings. The creative sphere suffered greatly from this war....”

From an application

In February 2022, as we all hoped that the two-year pandemic was coming to an end, and the life and work would go back to normal pace, Russia started a full scale invasion of Ukraine. It led to enormous destruction and deaths and has had huge impact on people's life and the situation in the world. The BCWT, with all its commitment and roots in longstanding East-West exchanges, activated all its capacities to constructively and uncompromisingly offer help and support to writers and translators from Ukraine.

At the same time, the Centre was in the process of scaling up its activities to reach full capacity. We have activated all our international networks that used to meet regularly on Gotland at or in connection to BCWT and made sure they came back to hold physical annual meetings. We have also scaled up and ensured that the national and international digital contacts developed during the pandemic would find their physical form. We have again started to receive school class visits and arrange public programs.

Several projects that had been postponed or put on hold were or about to be implemented, and in order to run both core and project activities, improvements to basic infrastructure when possible were made.

From the large number of applications for residency and enquiries about cooperation, from intense and urgent on-going conversations between writers and translators coming to BCWT, it can be concluded that in such troubled and uncertain time, the need for international meeting places like ÖFÖC is even more acute; - to have a place of for creative concentration and peace, to continue the international dialogue going, to keep the focus on democratic foundations and jointly promote freedom of expression.

On Facebook we came over a post written by Irina Malyshko, a writer and academic from Ukraine, who stayed at the Centre in June 2022. It is an existentially moving piece. Please, do read!

## **BCWT is a haven for work and a forum for exchange**

“Building bridges and breaking barriers”

BCWT is a work place for writers and translators with residency priority given to literary professionals from the countries of the Baltic Sea region and Nordic countries, yet the centre is open for applicants from all over the world. The main criteria for receiving a residency at BCWT is the professional character of literary work t. i. the works have been published at an established publishing, either in paper form or digital. The regular application form contains CV, list of publications, description of the project to be worked on.

During 2022 the BCWT hosted **115** residing guests from **26** countries. They could devote themselves to a literary project of their own, staying in average 2-5 weeks on a residency bursary, t. i. free of charge, and with 24-hours full access to all BCWT's facilities. Furthermore German Translation Fund, Swedish Writers' Fund, Swedish institute, Estonian Writers' Union, Finland Swedish Writers' Association, Norwegian Writers Union, Finnish Writers Union et al granted a number of individual earmarked bursaries, meant for a working residency at the BCWT. Three bursary were funded with by EU supported Translation-in-Motion partnership program, two bursaries by Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, a number of scholarships for Belarusian writers funded by Swedish Institute in cooperation with Swedish Writers' Union. A majority of the residing guests were authors and translators of poetry, prose, plays, screenplays, film scripts, libretto, essays, children books, non-fiction within humanities, though occasionally cultural administrators, publishers and other guests working in the literature field stayed in connection to a shorter project or meetings. BCWT actively facilitated dialogue between residents, as well as visibility of Centre's international activity. The Centre extensively served as a place for readings, Open Houses, film-screenings, meetings, talks, receptions, mingles, dinners and study

visits.

Serving and promoting the BCWT as an international meeting place the organization has been investing significant efforts into creating good working environment and welcoming conditions to develop professional and personal contacts and networking. Dinners, tea-hours, combined with talks and presentations of work-in-progress contribute to deeper acquaintance with each other's writing, culture, backgrounds, experiences. To inspire the guests by extraordinary historical and natural richness of the island, to create more opportunities for international dialogue-on-road a great number of excursions in Visby and around Gotland were arranged for residing guests and participants of the projects. A great number of presentations of the BCWT's activity were done for booked and drop-in study visits to the BCWT's premises.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

### **Baltic Writers Council**

Baltic Writers Council had its annual general assembly at Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators in Visby! A solidarity reading of Ukrainian poetry in translation into a numbers of Council's languages and English took place.



BWC. Here representatives from Swedish, Norwegian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Finnish, Estonian, Belarusian, Finland Swedish Writers' organizations, Norwegian, Polish, Finnish Translators Association

### Meeting of RECIT in Dublin

A new member of RECIT – Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation at Trinity College – hosted European Association of International Translators Centres in Dublin Ireland. The BCWT is long-term member of RECIT, and frequently has applied for European funding with partners within RECIT. As right now – RECIT is coordinator of EU funded Translation-in-Motion project



RECIT in Dublin. Here: Literarische Colloquium Berlin, Writers' Centre Norwich, Page Foundation Sofia, Translators Foundation Flanders, British Centre for Literature Translation, Dutch Translators Fund, Literary and Cultural Translation Trinity College Dublin

### Public events in selection

Exhibition of Estonian poet, graphic, designer **Asko Künnap**'s graphic works, put on by BCWT during Asko's residency. The exhibition continued at Almedals Library.

Poetry reading at BCWT.



### Adaptation-in-Residence

Heike Fink, writer from Germany, one of three winners of BCWT's Adaptation-in-Residence scholarship, gave a master class at Roxy within the frame of QUICKPIX2022. In cooperation with Film on Gotland



## Gotland Literary Network meets at BCWT

Book designer Nina Ulmaja talks about book covers



BCWT is a partner within EU funded “**Translation in Motion**” project which has been implemented year 2022

Three translators stayed within the program at BCWT. Interviews with the bursary-holders were recorded and published, meetings with Gotland school pupils and local community were carried out.



**Jelena Vojinovic** from Montenegro is an aspiring literary translator from Scandinavian languages into Serbian. During her residency stay at the Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators, Jelena worked on the finishing touches of the translation of **Olaug Nilssen's** *Yt etter evne, få etter behov* (2020) into Serbian, as well as starting a new translation project of Fredrik Brattberg's dramas.



**Nikola Perišić** is a literary translator from Swedish, Danish and English into Serbian, based in Belgrade and its surroundings, working as a freelancer. In the last two decades he has translated around 50 books published in Serbia, some of them with support from the Swedish Institute and the Swedish Art Council.

During his residency stay at the BCWT Nikola was working on the translation of some lesser-known works by August Strindberg into Serbian.



**Slavica Milosavljevic** translates mainly from Swedish into Serbian but also Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian literary works into Swedish.

Since 2000 she has translated more than 70 literary works.

At BCWT she translated **Tove Janssons** *Den ärliga bedragaren*.

## **Cooperation with Literature House Kiraathane, Swedish Research Institute and Swedish General Consulate in Istanbul**

**“Three weeks at BCWT on Gotland”** is called a program that includes bursaries and travel support for Turkish writers, nominated by Kiraathane as a result of an open call selection. Year 2022 two writers worked at BCWT:

**Deniz Gedizlioğlu**, a writer and translator of several non-fiction works from English. Identifying as non-binary Deniz's pronouns are they/them. They hold a PhD in Cinema and Media research and are active in LGBTI+ movement in Turkey.

**Birgül Oğuz**: the award-winning author of two novellas and a book of short stories. She co-wrote the screenplay of Ruptures which premiered in London Film Festival in 2019. In 2015, Birgül was a participant in the International Writing Program (IWP) in Iowa.

### **Special grants**

BCWT in cooperation with Belarusian (officially closed by Belarus authorities) and Swedish Writers Union and with the financial support from Swedish institute hosted writers from Belarus.

German Translators' Fund awarded bursaries to a number of German translators  
Estonian Writers Union to Estonian writers for a residency at BCWT.

Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul granted two bursaries to Turkish writers for residencies at the BCWT

BCWT's chairman Olle Jansson donated, as years before, his chair remuneration of 10000 SEK as a bursary, which was granted to the Ukrainian translator from Latvian - Lina Melnyk.

### **How BCWT is being governed and managed**

#### **Members and founders**

of the non-profit organization BCWT (Östersjöns författar- och översättarcentrum) are Swedish Writers' Union, County Administrative Board of Gotland and Region Gotland. The members appoint three representatives each to the Meeting of the Representatives. The members as well nominate Swedish members to the Board of the BCWT.

## **Representatives**

County Administrative Board of Gotland: Britt Silfvergren, Hanna Johansson

Region Gotland: Inger Harlevi, Carin Rosell

Deputies: Bo Björkman, Eva Gahnström

Swedish Writers' Union: Lena Karlin, Elin Hägg, Anisur Rahman

Annual Meeting of the Representatives was held at BCWT on 14 of June, in person.



## **Board of the BCWT**

is composed of a Chairman and six members and six deputies who are appointed by the Representatives at their annual meeting, and the Board internally appoints its Deputy Chairman. Of the Board's six members, two are nominated by the Swedish Writers' Union, two - by the County Administrative Board of Gotland, of whom one represents Uppsala University Campus Gotland, one member is to be nominated by Region Gotland. The Baltic Writers' Council nominates two members representing the foreign Writers' and Translators Unions for a two year period.

## **Members of the Board**

Olle Jansson, chairman, Campus Gotland Uppsala university

Ulf Hammarlund, Region Gotland

Thomas N. Persson, County Administrative Board of Gotland

Janina Orlov / Stefan Ingvarsson, Swedish Writers' Union.

Dmitri Plax, Belarus Writers' Union / Ville Hytönen, Finnish & Estonian Writers' Union; Baltic Writers' Council.

Marius Burokas, Lithuanian Writers' Union, Baltic Writers' Council

Deputies:

Oskar Lindster, Region Gotland

Cecilia Hansson, Viveka Sjögren, Swedish Writers' Union

Anna Klingofer-Szostakowska, Polish Translators' Association / Mudite Treimane, Latvian Writers' Union; Baltic Writers' Council

### Meetings of the Board

During the year 2022 the Board held meetings on **10th March**

via zoom, **5th May** in person at BCWT, **14th June** – via

zoom, **6th December** – via zoom.

### Baltic Writers' Council – BWC

The Baltic Writers' Council (BWC) represents 21 literary organizations, 12 countries and c a 17.000 members around the Baltic Sea region and Nordic countries.

The Council which was founded during the legendary authors and translators' Baltic Sea voyage in 1992 is a multinational, non-profit, non-governmental organization which promotes the freedom of expression, democracy and the free flow of ideas and information between the writers' and translators' organizations. It also aims to support and inspire BCWT activities. The BCWT is the headquarters for BWC, which nominates two members and two deputies to BCWT's Board. The chairperson of Baltic Writers' Council since General Assembly is **Malin Kivelä** (Finland Swedish Writers Association)

After two years of withhold due the pandemic BWC had its General Assembly in person at BCWT on **6-7 May**.

In connection to the General Assembly a solidarity reading of Ukranian poetry translated into the languages of the Council's organizations and English took place.

### The Office

has been open every weekday 8.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.

Employees:

Lena Pasternak – director

Patrik Muskos - managing assistant.

Natalia Shevchuk – household cleaning

Services: Hemstädning

Accountant: Gustav Söderdahl

Auditors: Barbro Hallgren and Elena Stepanova

BCWT is funded by

Swedish Arts Council  
Region Gotland

Grants, bursaries, projects were funded with the support from EU, German Translation Fund, Natur & Kultur, Swedish Institute.

In 2022 BCWT cooperated and communicated, on a daily basis and in connection to projects, with a great number of international, national and local organisations and authorities

Swedish Arts Council, County Administrative Board on Gotland, Region Gotland, Swedish Writers' Union, Übersetzerhaus Looren in Switzerland, Ventspils International Writers and Translators House, Baltic Writers' Council, Publishing house Natur och Kultur, Baltic Art Center, Visby International Composers Centre, Estonian Writers' Union, Belarus Writers' Association, Campus Gotland Uppsala University, Almedalen Library Visby, German Translators' Fund, RECIT – Réseau Européen des Centres Internationaux de Traducteurs littéraires, Swedish PEN, Film on Gotland, Bergman Center, Literature House Kiraathane in Istanbul, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Swedish General Consulate in Istanbul, Literature and Culture Translation Centre at Trinity College Dublin, Literature Centre Dublin, Translation House Looren, Deutscher Übersetzerfonds, network SWAN.

### **Thank you from BCWT's Board**

To maintain and develop the activity of BCWT is only possible thanks to support and vital relations with institutions, organisations and private persons in many countries.

Thank you all!

Visby, May 2023

Olle Jansson

Janina Orlov

Ulf Hammarlund

Stefan Ingvarsson

Thomas N. Persson

Marius Burokas

Ville Hytönen

## Reflections and feed-backs by writers and translators, residents at BCWT

Bästa Visbycentret,

... Det var ett tag sedan jag besökte Visby/centret och det var närmast överkligt att allt står på plats igen efter Covid-åren. Och ännu finare har det blivit då ni renoverat så fint. Redan på färjan infinner sig arbetsron och när man väl är på plats är det bara att fortsätta. Det är något med atmosfären ni lyckats skapa som gör detta. Man vet ut i fingerspetsarna vad som gäller. Genom åren har jag i olika omgångar arbetat med olika bokprojekt i olika faser hos er. Mitt mål denna gång var konkret, behövde arbeta med struktur/del tre kvartetten jag skriver på...

Susanna Alakoski

Nyss hemkommen efter vistelsen hos er i Visby. Stort tack. Ni lyckas verkligen skapa en miljö där man både kan känna sig välkommen och få arbetsro. Arbetat intensivt med att sy ihop de sista röda trådarna i min kommande essä med deadline i mitten på augusti så det var otroligt värdefullt att få den här veckan prick nu. Som alltid fin stämning och även inspirerande med de internationella gästerna, även om jag den här gången inte hade mycket tid till att hänga med de andra författarna, ytterligare en aspekt som är så värdefull med vistelserna hos er... total respekt från alla för behovet att vara i sina kreativa processer. Vill också passa på och berömma er för att det är så fin ordning på allt. Roligt att se att centret fått ett lyft sedan jag var hos er sist. Så fräscht allting.

Mvh/ Mats Söderlund



### Note on my stay at the Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators in April 2022

The two-part centre with the kitchen, the library downstairs and the fireplace room upstairs as communication areas and the building with the single rooms as a place to work and rest is ideal: I have very interesting conversations about individual steps in the translation process with an Icelandic author, which inspire me a lot for my work, and I can work extremely concentrated in my room on my project - it is the translation of Terhi Kokkonen's novel "Rajamaa" (Borderland) from Finnish into German.

For this project, staying at the Centre is almost life-saving. For the first time in my more than twenty-year career as a translator, I had a lot of trouble finding the right linguistic tone and the right syntactic rhythm at home in Berlin in the initial phase of the translation and unfortunately also for a long time afterwards.

As soon as I was in Visby and had the wide view of the sea in front of me and the refreshing clean air, had all everyday obligations been put on pause with my arrival on the island, the knot was loosened and I finally found the adequate German language and syntax for my translation. It was a huge relief because otherwise, for the first time in my life, I wouldn't have really satisfied the book, the author and my ethos as a translator.

The center with its ideal conditions for focusing, but also for becoming wide and open because of the view over the Baltic Sea, absolutely saved my project. On top of that, I really enjoy my work again, the motivation is just there again.

The exchange with the Icelandic author during several “kitchen talks” also contributed to this. I am deeply grateful to Lena Pasternak and Patrik Muskos, as well as to all sponsors and donors, that this place for writing and translation exists. There is no better place to work for me.

Elina Kritzokat / Literary translations from Finnish to German

One year ago I was in beautiful Visby working hard in order to complete the translation of the Sci-Fi novel by Hao Jingfang here attached. Thanks to the magic of the island and to the warm support of the Centre (your kind help and delicate presence, the quiet days and nights, the embrace of the wind, the astonishing views of the Baltic Sea, the nice company of other translators and writers at work in dinners, the breathtaking sight out of the window of my cozy room, working sessions by the fire-place ...) I completed the first draft.

This book came out in 2020, we're now at its 3rd print. As for Chinese literature in Italy it's a small miracle and a huge honor for me.

As soon as I left you last year a world's crisis began. And now, after a whole year of lock-down here in the south of Europe, I remember with deep love the chance you gave me: to breathe, to concentrate, to move freely, to accomplish at my best a work of the greatest importance for me and Italian readers interested in discovering new angles of the world.

I do hope I will be able to work again in Visby - I must admit there's no such a place where a translator can be so inspired and serene to do what he/she does at his/hers best.

Silvia Pozzi

In September 2022 I was allowed to spend a month in Visby at the BCWT and work here on the adaptation of the novel "Hyde" by Antje Wagner into a screenplay. It was a wonderful, very intense time for me. Everything was very well organized and I received a warm welcome.

I have been to the BCWT a few times before and I am always happy that there is such a great place for writers and I wish every writer that they can have this wonderful experience.

What I managed to do in Visby:

I was able to completely finish the treatment for the script. I started by writing the outline and then worked it out into a literary treatment, which is about 30 pages long. I also tried out five dialogue scenes to find out how the characters in the story speak and so I was able to get closer to them linguistically and personally. Furthermore, I created a mood board with pictures to visualise the mood and look of the story and thus prepare myself for an interview with a director. Antje Wagner's novel "Hyde" lives from the visual images. They are very special and correspond strongly with the character of the main character.

In addition to the main plot of the story - which is set in the present in winter on the one hand and in the past in summer on the other - I have added two further subplots. These are only hinted at in the novel. I have expanded them and placed them in autumn and spring. It seemed

appealing to me to use all the seasons in order to trace the development of the young heroine in this way. I discussed all this with Antje Wagner.

The conversations with Lena Pasternak and Patrik Muskos were also always very important and enriching for me. You couldn't wish for better and more passionate leaders for the Baltic Centre. Every conversation was an inspiration. My utmost thanks and also respect for the work they do to create such a place for writers and translators.

During the time in Visby there was a wonderful coincidence. When I borrowed a book from the library, I came across one by Antje Wagner that I didn't know yet. There was a dedication to the Baltic Centre in it. It was a very big surprise for me that Antje had also once been Artist in Residence here. So she was here, where I am now. For me it was a fantastic sign – and I thought: There are no coincidences! Everything falls into place.

On 17 September I was a guest for a masterclass on “from book to film and mockumentary” at the GOTLANDS KORTFILMSFESTIVAL – QUICKPIX at FOLKET'S BIO VISBY. Here I showed clips from my latest documentary and talked about the power and challenges of the hybrid – documentary fiction and mockumentaries. It was a great and a very special experience for me to connect directly with the audience and exchange ideas. I was very well supported by Monalisa Sundbom and Vilhelm Jegerhjelm, who also did the friendly and informative moderation.

I would like to thank you very much for the scholarship. It was the best thing that could have happened to me.

Heike Fink, Germany

Between the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 13 and 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 I had the occasion to spend a working stay at the Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators in Visby. As a translator, I demanded a residence to finish my translation of Monique Wittig book *Les Guérillères* (1969) into slovenian language. This is what I completed in the first part of my stay, and then I was doing the corrections of my 22 years old translation of the *Second sex* by Simone de Beauvoir for the new edition – partly corrections of errors that have occurred in the scanned text, partly adaptations of my translation. To do this, a very careful and uninterrupted reading was necessary – so the “isolation” at BCWT was an ideal opportunity for this kind of concentration.

It is a great privilege to be able to work in such a favourable and magnificent frame. Gotland's surroundings are so euphorically attractive, that it is impossible not to profit from them – and in spite of all excursions that I could do, my stay was highly productive, as if this vicinity was most inspiring and constructive.

The atmosphere of BCWT was for me considerably different from the one that I know from translator's residences (Arles, Looren, Seneffe). The presence of writers gives occasion to the other sort of discussions, more centered on the creative process and its difficulties. This brought us to some highly professional debates that gave me some new insight on the literary creation. And I also got some precious information about contemporary European authors, especially in theatre, which will maybe be a good impulse for new translation.

Suzana Koncut

I met Gotland, Visby and the BCWT as i start a new translation: discovering new words, new characters, new stories, images and universes, with all my humility, curiosity and sensibility. You offered me these 3 unforgettable colorful autumn weeks and i don't know how to thank you.

Arriving in Visby, i had the strange and beautiful feeling to be so far away and like home. I immediately knew that i would have to make the most of each day, each second. Cause even if everything in Visby is so wonderfully slow and quiet, these days just flew by full of emotions, surprises, inspirations, hard work, fun and rest too, magical human experiences.

I translated an italian novel into french (i will send it to you) and started with a new one, i read 3 books, enjoyed Visby's streets, cafés, library and people, i tasted sauna, visited Ingmar Bergman in Faro, listened to the birds and Sankta Maria's melodies, went for amazing runs, walks, bicycle tours, looked through my charming windows. I even started to learn swedish and to write some notes that will may become something like a personal novel. Then i met Tarja, Deividas, Kateryna, Ulrika, Jone, Kirsi, Linda... and you Lena, Lina, Patrik. The only thing i couldn't do was swimming in the Baltic Sea (a bit too cold for the viking-girl-in-progress i am right now !)

For all these reasons I think, I already dream of coming back soon, maybe next year in spring (april/may/june) or fall again, if you find a small place for me, surely with a new franco-italian project to share.

Encore et encore et encore : MERCI.  
Ce n'est, je l'espère, qu'un au revoir ;-)  
Prenez bien soin de vous.  
Vive le BCWT et le "Baltic Waves" !

Lise Caillat

## Irina Malyshko

Stayed at BCWT in June 2022

Lives in Kiev

From Donetsk

Irina's facebook post



Irina Malyshko and Sofia Hoas, coordinator for Region Gotland-Gammalsvenskby/Berislav in Ukraine twin town cooperation, at BCWT, June 2022 ©Lena Pasternak

”Эту историю нужно было рассказать давно, сразу по возвращению из Готланда, но тогда бы сказка для меня закончилась. А мне так хотелось - чтобы она продолжалась. В жизни всегда есть место чуду, и оно происходит тогда, когда его совсем не ждешь. Так получилось и у меня. ... “

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This story should have been told a long time ago, right after I returned from Gotland, but then the tale would have ended. I wanted it to go on.

There is always room for a miracle in life, and it happens when you don't expect it at all.

That's how it worked out for me. I came to Gotland by chance, I was sent a link to apply for a writer's residency, at that moment there were negotiations about the translation of "The Little Man's War" into Swedish (negotiations are still in progress), Sweden was in my interest, and I did not particularly read where I was going - I filled out the application, without much hope of a positive outcome.

But unexpectedly I got a positive response. However, it turned out that I was not going to Sweden itself, but to Gotland, and in fact - I was in a fairy tale. There is no other way to describe my stay at the Baltic Centre for Writers and Translators

I cannot describe in one post, all the good things that you get in BCWT. (To make your life comfortable and as comfortable as possible, everything here is thought out in detail (the presence of a trivial thread and needle (in case you need it) and pliers to remove ticks - these are just minor details)). Just as I can't describe how love-filled the space is, I will only say one thing. For the first time since 2014, when the war broke out and my big resettlement journey began, I felt safe in Gotland.

Now I want to talk about something else, in my opinion - more important. Once you find yourself in BCWT - you get to a place where civilizations meet. (Strugatsky has this idea - civilizations meet on the side of the galaxy). Gotland, you might say, has become the margins of our earthly galaxy, taking on the mission of being a meeting place. This was the purpose of the creation of the BCWT when the Iron Curtain fell, and the Cold War ended - It was necessary to integrate the post-Soviet Baltic republics into Baltic sea unity. In reality, the scope of integration is much wider, there is room for everyone on Gotland, language barriers fall here, and those arriving in the BCWT begin to communicate in the same language, even if in different language forms.

As a result of such communication - usually become long creative bonds, new projects arise, new ideas are born. In our difficult time, when Ukraine is torn apart by war that is persistently knocking on Europe's doors, when military bases are again returning to Gotland - the role of such communications is extremely important.

In Gotland I met the beautiful Cécile Dutheil de la Rochère, our communication resulted in an article in the French magazine En attendant Nadeau about Mariupol.

The article in the comments below the post.

Photo of the fabulous Gotland by Kadri Kõusaar - a beautiful writer and filmmaker from Estonia



Irina Malyshko on Gotland

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