

**Max Frisch & Friedrich Dürrenmatt**

**Max Frisch, Friedrich Dürrenmatt - Correspondence**

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**Max Frisch  
Friedrich  
Dürrenmatt**  
*Briefwechsel*  
Herausgegeben von  
Peter Rüedi

*Diogenes*

The letters published here for the first time document the unusual and not always easy friendship between Switzerland's two most famous 20th century writers: Max Frisch and Friedrich Dürrenmatt. The literary world linked Switzerland's two most famous 20th century writers inseparably together like a pair of comedians, something by which both authors were sometimes amused but more often irritated. Their common ground was their experience of Switzerland, isolated and spared from conflict between 1939 and 1945, and the guilt which the country incurred during World War II; their preoccupation with and different approaches to Kierkegaard and Brecht; their dissimilar but equally definite criticism of the army and anticommunism; their work at the Zurich Schauspielhaus theatre with the dramaturgist Kurt Hirschfeld whom they both admired. An epilogue by Peter Rüedi, for many years a critic of both authors, points out some connections between the letters, the authors' lives and work, and contemporary history.

## Book factsheet

Letters and conversations, General Fiction  
240 pages  
12.5 x 20 cm  
October 1998

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### Rights currently sold:

English/world (Seagull)  
French (Zoé)

### Movie adaptations

**2015: Im Labyrinth / Friedrich Dürrenmatt.  
Der kritische Geist der Schweiz**

Director: Sabine Gisiger  
Screenplay: Sabine Gisiger

**2010: Schurkenstück**

Director: Torsten C. Fischer  
Screenplay: Eva Zahn  
Cast: Katharina Schüttler und Oliver Korritke

**2008: Der Besuch der alten Dame**

Director: Nikolaus Leytner  
Screenplay: Thomas Eifler  
Cast: Christiane Hörbiger, Michael Mendl,  
Muriel Baumeister, Rolf Hoppe, Rüdiger Vogler

**2001: The Pledge**

Director: Sean Penn  
Cast: Margaret Larsen, Helen Jackson

**1997: Es geschah am hellichten Tag**

Director: Nico Hofmann  
Cast: Joachim Król, Barbara Rudnik, Axel  
Milberg

**1996: Es geschah am hellichten Tag**

Director: Bernd Eichinger  
Cast: Joachim Krol, Barbara Rudnik, Axel  
Milberg

**1995: Tod im kalten Morgenlicht**

Director: Rudolf van den Berg  
Cast: Richard E. Grant, Lynsey Baxter, Perdita  
Weeks

**1994: Der Wiedertäufer**

Director: Heinrich Koch

**1994: In the Cold Light of Day**

Director: Rudolf van den Berg  
Cast: Richard E. Grant, Perdita Weeks, Simon  
Cadell

**1993: Justiz**

Director: Hans Werner Geißendörfer  
Cast: Maximilian Schell, Thomas Heinze,  
Matthias Gnädinger, Anna Thalbach

**1992: Hyènes**

Director: Djibril diop Mamberty  
Cast: Mansour Diouf, Ami Diakhate



Max Frisch was born in 1911 in Zurich, and was an architect and writer. Alongside stage plays and novels, he also published radio plays and short stories, as well as literary journals. He was awarded with, amongst others, the ›Georg Büchner‹ prize and the ›Peace Prize of the German Booksellers' Association‹. He died in Zurich in 1991.



Friedrich Dürrenmatt (1921 – 1990) was born in Konolfingen near Berne as the son of a protestant minister. He studied philosophy, German literature and history of art in Berne and Zurich and worked as a playwright, novelist, essayist and painter in Neuchâtel, where he lived with his family.

#### **Movie adaptations (cont'd)**

##### **1992: Hyänen / Hyènes, Ramatou**

Director: Djibril diop Mamberty  
Screenplay: Djibril diop Mamberty  
Cast: Mansour Diouf, Ami Diakhate

##### **1989: Die Welt ist ein Irrenhaus: Achterloo IV**

Director: Roman Brodman

##### **1988: Achterloo**

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Helmut Lohner, Georg Preusse

##### **1988: Abendstunde im Spätherbst**

Director: August Everding  
Cast: Mario Adorf, Horst Bollmann

##### **1982: Der Besuch der alten Dame**

Director: Max Peter Ammann  
Cast: Maria Schell, Günter Lamprecht, Ruedi Walter

##### **1982: Der Besuch der alten Dame**

Director: Max Peter Ammann  
Cast: Maria Schell, Adolphe Spalinger, Günter Lamprecht

##### **1975: Der Richter und sein Henker**

Director: Maximilian Schell  
Cast: Jon Voight, Jacqueline Bisset, Helmut Qualtinger, Robert Shaw, Friedrich Dürrenmatt

##### **1974: Der Mitmacher**

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Buddy Elias, Elmar Schulte, Werner Schumacher

##### **1973: Der Besuch der alten Dame**

Director: Hans/Cella Gaugler/Ettore  
Cast: Hasle Rüegsau

##### **1973: Der Wiedertäufer**

Director: Werner Schlechte  
Cast: E. Marks, F. Schütter, V. Lechtenbrink

##### **1972: La piu bella serata della mia vita**

Director: Ettore Scola  
Cast: Alberto Sordi, Michel Simon, Pierre Brasseur

##### **1971: König Johann**

Director: Vaclav Hudcek  
Cast: H. Qualtinger, H. Seeböck

##### **1971: Porträt eines Planeten**

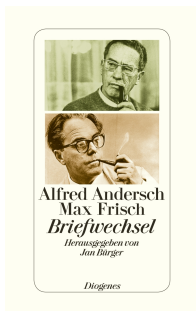
Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: W. Reichmann, H. Lohner, Ch. Hörbiger

##### **1967: Frank V. Opfer einer Privatbank**

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Therese Giehse, Hubert von Meyernick

##### **1967: Der Meteor**

Director: Leopold Lindtberg  
Cast: Leonard Steckel, Wolfgang Forester, Gert Westphal, Peter Brogle



**Correspondence**  
192 pages  
2014



**Subject Matter**  
2352 pages  
2021



**The Plays**  
1584 pages  
2015



**The Crime Novels**  
992 pages  
2011

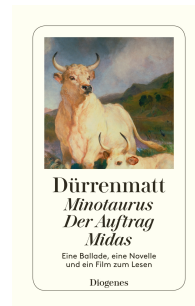


**His Life in Pictures**  
376 pages  
2011

**Labyrinth / Turmbau**  
(Subject Matter I-IX)  
736 pages  
2002



**My Switzerland**  
256 pages  
1998



**The Minotaur / The Assignment; or, On the Observing of the Observer of the Observers / Midas**  
208 pages  
1998



**Switzerland - A Prison**  
80 pages  
1997

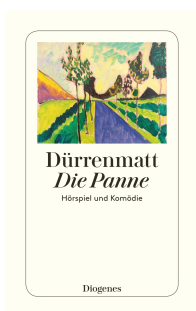
**Conversations 1961-1990**  
1296 pages  
1996



**The Pledge**  
160 pages  
1996



**The Pensioner**  
200 pages  
1995



**Traps**  
144 pages  
1995

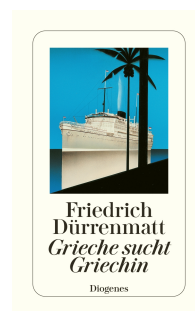
**Movie Adaptation**



**The Enormity of the Possible**  
144 pages  
1993



**Gedankenfuge**  
208 pages  
1992



**Greek Man Seeks Greek Wife**  
160 pages  
1992

**Movie Adaptation**

## **Movie adaptations (cont'd)**

### **1966: Grieche sucht Griechin**

Director: Rolf Thiele  
Cast: Heinz Rühmann, Irina Demick, Charles Regnier

### **1965: Romulus der Große**

Director: Helmut Käutner  
Cast: Romuald Pekny

### **1964: Ein Engel kommt nach Babylon**

Director: William Dieterle

### **1964: Die Physiker**

Director: Fritz Umgelter  
Cast: Therese Giehse, Gustav Knuth, Kurt Ehrhardt, Wolfgang Kieling, Siegfried Lowitz

### **1963: The Visit**

Director: Bernhard Wicki  
Cast: Ingrid Bergmann, Anthony Quinn, Hans-Christian Blech

### **1961: Die Ehe des Herrn Mississippi**

Director: Kurt Hoffmann  
Cast: O.E. Hasse, Johanna von Koczian, Martin Held, Charles Regnier, Max Haufler

### **1960: Abendstunde im Spätherbst**

Director: Rudolf Noelte  
Cast: Ernst Schröder, Friedrich Maurer, Günter Meissner

### **1959: Der Besuch der alten Dame**

Director: Ludwig Cremer  
Cast: R. Wanka, E. Flickenschildt, A. Schradiek

### **1958: Es geschah am hellichten Tag**

Director: Ladislao Vajda  
Screenplay: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Heinz Rühmann, Michel Simon, Gert Fröbe

### **1957: Der Richter und sein Henker**

Director: Franz Peter Wirth  
Cast: Herbert Tiede, Maria Körber, K.G. Saebisch

### **1957: Die Panne**

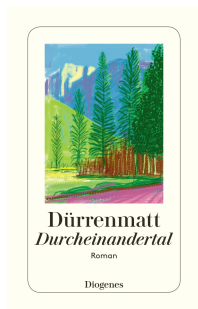
Director: Fritz Umgelter  
Cast: Peter Ahrweiler, Carl Wery, Harry Hardt

## **Praise**

Friedrich Dürrenmatt

»Even after the death of its author, his huge and unique work is still a dark continent, largely unilluminated and untested, a continent in motion, always good for intellectual surprises and dramatic adventures.« – Gert Ueding

»Dürrenmatt was addressing the real crowd assembled in real theaters with all their swiftly changing feelings, their ignorance, bad habits and vaulting possibilities. At the same time he was a philosopher-poet with one eye on the picture of the real, on artifice, and on the long preoccupations of philosophy and art through the ages.« – Arthur Miller



**The Vale of Confusion**  
176 pages  
1989



**Trials**  
184 pages  
1988



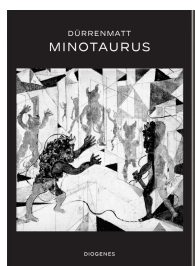
**The Judge and His Hangman**  
128 pages  
1986



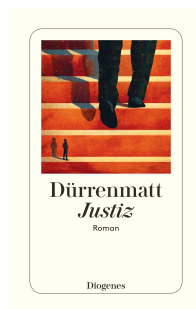
**The Assignment**  
136 pages  
1986



**Suspicion**  
128 pages  
1986



**The Minotaur**  
56 pages  
1985



**Justice**  
376 pages  
1985  
 **Movie Adaptation**



**The Winter War in Tibet**  
192 pages  
1984



**Achterloo**  
128 pages  
1983



**The Winter War in Tibet/ Lunar Eclipse/ The Rebel**  
360 pages  
1981  
 **Movie Adaptation**



**Nexus**  
240 pages  
1980



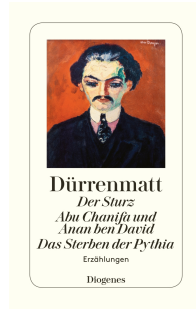
**The Anabaptists**  
144 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**



**Urfaust/ Woyzeck. Adaptations**  
208 pages  
1980



**Theatre**  
272 pages  
1980



**The Coup/ Abu Chanifa and Anan ben David/ Smithy/ The Dying of the Pythia**  
160 pages  
1980



**Romulus the Great**  
176 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**

## Praise (cont'd)

»Dürrenmatt has always been too impulsive for his times but the chaotic world has quickly caught up with him. That's why his work will last. The purifying force of his irony becomes the more important and useful – particularly because it is driven by the profound humanity that Dürrenmatt's friends always knew in him.« – Peter Brook

»Now, like an avalanche in far-off mountains, comes Friedrich Dürrenmatt, a detective-story writer with a genius for the theater, to give us a new theme, or rather to remind us of an ancient one: justice. His vision is a cold one but pure, and very nearly unique in our day, for in his devotion to the idea of justice he has succeeded in casting across an age committed to false Love the dark shadow of the scales.« – Gore Vidal

»It was once observed by Oscar Wilde that a writer should be able to write anything. Mr. Dürrenmatt meets Wilde's requirement. He adopts a manner well liked by some of our better writers, that of a Roman of the later Empire, a golden weariness. Mr. Dürrenmatt chooses compression of style and strictness of form, but the late Imperial feeling is still there.« – Saul Bellow

»One of Europe's most important postwar dramatists.« – The Daily Telegraph, London

»Next to Kafka and Camus, he is one of the great questioners of this world.« – Martin Ebel / Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich

»Friedrich Dürrenmatt belonged to the most cheerful apocalyptic writers of the 20th century.« – Thomas Hürlimann / Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zurich

»Universal, uncomfortable and visionary: Friedrich Dürrenmatt is the worthy reigning literary monarch of the year.« – Wener Krause / Kleine Zeitung, Graz

»He is evil, he doesn't think anything good of humanity, and he describes this – but he does it with wit.« – Elke Heidenreich / SRF2, Zurich

»Friedrich Dürrenmatt is a centennial author, because he saw the century that was to follow him too.« – Daniele Muscionico / Aargauer Zeitung, Aarau

»One of the greatest writers of our century.« – Corriere della Sera, Milan





**The Complete Prose**  
Oeuvre  
3024 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Politik*  
Essays, Gedichte und Reden  
Diogenes

**Politics**  
192 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Play Strindberg*  
*Porträt eines Planeten*  
Übungsstücke für Schauspieler  
Diogenes

**Play Strindberg/ Portrait of a Planet**  
208 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Die Physiker*  
Komödie  
Diogenes

**The Physicists**  
96 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



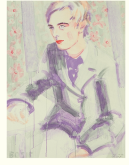
**Dürrenmatt**  
*Philosophie und Naturwissenschaft*  
Essays, Gedichte und Reden  
Diogenes

**Philosophical Essays**  
208 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Der Mitmacher*  
Ein Komplex  
Diogenes

**The Conformist**  
336 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Der Meteor*  
*Dichterdämmerung*  
Nobelpreisträgerstücke  
Diogenes

**The Meteor/ Twilight of the Poets**  
208 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Literatur und Kunst*  
Essays, Gedichte und Reden  
Diogenes

**Literature and Painting**  
240 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Kritik*  
Kritiken und Zeichnungen  
Diogenes

**Reviews**  
176 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*König Johann*  
*Titus Andronicus*  
Shakespeare-Umarbeitungen  
Diogenes

**King John/ Titus Andronicus**  
240 pages  
1980

**Movie Adaptation**



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Der Hund*  
*Der Tunnel*  
*Die Panne*  
Erzählungen  
Diogenes

**The Dog/ The Tunnel/ Traps**  
112 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Herkules und der Stall des Augias*  
*Der Prozeß um des Esels Schatten*  
Griechische Stücke  
Diogenes

**Hercules and the Augean Stables/ The Trial about the Donkey's Shadow**  
240 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Grieche sucht Griechin*  
*Mister X macht Ferien*  
Grottesken  
Diogenes

**Greek Man Seeks Greek Wife/ Mr. X Goes on Holiday/ News about the State of Press during the Stone Age**  
208 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Nächtliches Gespräch mit einem verachteten Menschen*  
Hörspiele und Kabarett  
Diogenes

**Nocturnal Conversation with a Scorned Man/ Stranitzky and the National Hero/ The Vega Enterprise**  
160 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Die Frist*  
Komödie  
Diogenes

**The Deadline**  
160 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Frank der Fünfte*  
Komödie einer Privatbank  
Diogenes


**Frank V**  
176 pages  
1980

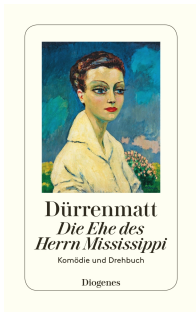
**Movie Adaptation**




**It Is Written/ The Blind Man**  
336 pages  
1980



**An Angel Comes to Babylon**  
144 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**



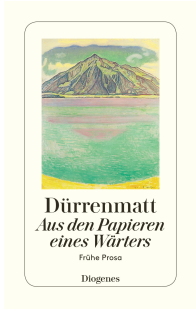
**The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi**  
224 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**



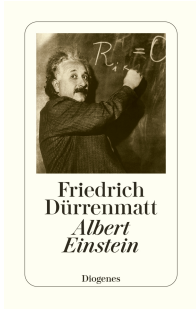
**The Complete Dramatic Oeuvre**  
3408 pages  
1980



**The Visit**  
160 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**



**Early Prose: Christmas/ The Torturer/ The Sausage/ The Son/ The Old Man/ Portrait of Sisyphos/ The Theatre Director/ The Trap/ Pilatos/ The Town/ From the Papers of a Guardsman**  
208 pages  
1980



**Albert Einstein**  
80 pages  
1979