

**Friedrich Dürrenmatt**  
***The Visit***

Published by Diogenes as *Der Besuch der alten Dame*  
Original title: *Der Besuch der alten Dame*



**Dürrenmatt**  
***Der Besuch  
der alten Dame***

Tragische Komödie

Diogenes

In ›The Visit‹ an old lady who becomes the wealthiest person in the world returns to the village that cast her out as a young woman and offers riches to the town in exchange for the life of the man, now its mayor, who once disgraced her.

## Book factsheet

Contemporary Literature, Compulsory Reading  
160 pages  
11.3 x 18 cm  
February 1980

Contact:

Susanne Bauknecht, Rights Director,  
susanne.bauknecht@diogenes.ch and Suzanne  
Hégelé, Film Rights Manager,  
suzanne.hegele@diogenes.ch

**Translation rights currently sold:**

Azerbaijani (Alatoran)  
Chinese/CN (People's Literature)  
Czech (Artur)  
English/UK (Jonathan Cape)  
English/USA (Grove /Atlantic)  
English/world (University of Chicago)  
French (L'Arche)  
Hebrew (Or Am)  
Italian (Einaudi)  
Japanese (Choeisha)  
Korean (Minumsa)  
Romanian (Univers)  
Spanish/world (Tusquets)  
Uzbek (Voris)

 **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: Joachaim 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



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.



**Subject Matter**  
2352 pages  
2021



**The Plays**  
1584 pages  
2015



**The Crime Novels**  
992 pages  
2011

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



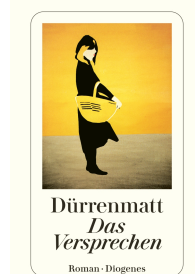
**My Switzerland**  
256 pages  
1998



**The Minotaur / The Assignment; or, On the Observing of the Observers / Midas**  
Eine Ballade, eine Novelle und ein Film zum Lesen  
208 pages  
1998



**Switzerland - A Prison**  
80 pages  
1997



**The Pledge**  
160 pages  
1996  
Movie Adaptation

## Movie adaptations (cont'd)

### 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: Hyänen / Hyènes, Ramatou

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

### 1992: Hyènes

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

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

Director: Roman Brodman

### 1988: Abendstunde im Spätherbst

Director: August Everding  
Cast: Mario Adorf, Horst Bollmann

### 1988: Achterloo

Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Helmut Lohner, Georg Preusse

### 1982: Der Besuch der alten Dame

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

### 1982: Der Besuch der alten Dame

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

### 1975: Der Richter und sein Henker

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

### 1974: Der Mitmacher

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

### 1973: Der Wiedertäufer

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

### 1973: Der Besuch der alten Dame

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

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

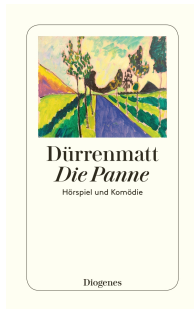
Director: Ettore Scola  
Cast: Alberto Sordi, Michel Simon, Pierre Brasseur

### 1971: Porträt eines Planeten

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



**The Pensioner**  
200 pages  
1995



**Traps**  
144 pages  
1995

**Movie Adaptation**



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



**Gedankenfuge**  
208 pages  
1992

**Movie adaptations (cont'd)**

**1971: König Johann**  
Director: Vaclav Hudcek  
Cast: H. Qualtinger, H. Seeböck

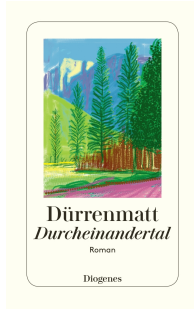
**1967: Der Meteor**  
Director: Leopold Lindtberg  
Cast: Leonard Steckel, Wolfgang Forester, Gert Westphal, Peter Brogle

**1967: Frank V. Opfer einer Privatbank**  
Director: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Therese Giehse, Hubert von Meyernick



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

**Movie Adaptation**



**The Vale of Confusion**  
176 pages  
1989



**Trials**  
184 pages  
1988



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

**1966: Griechen sucht Griechin**  
Director: Rolf Thiele  
Cast: Heinz Rühmann, Irina Demick, Charles Regnier

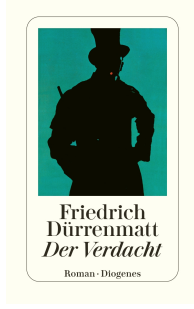
**1965: Romulus der Große**  
Director: Helmut Käutner  
Cast: Romuald Pekny

**1964: Die Physiker**  
Director: Fritz Umgelter  
Cast: Therese Giehse, Gustav Knuth, Kurt Ehrhardt, Wolfgang Kieling, Siegfried Lowitz

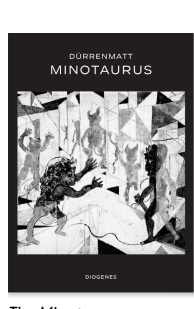
**1964: Ein Engel kommt nach Babylon**  
Director: William Dieterle



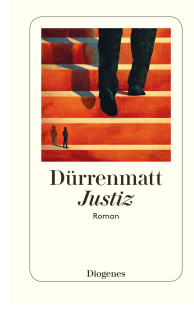
**The Assignment**  
136 pages  
1986



**Suspicion**  
128 pages  
1986



**The Minotaur**  
56 pages  
1985



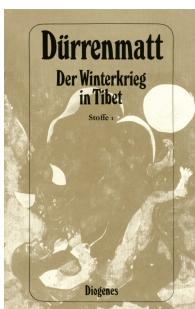
**Justice**  
376 pages  
1985

**Movie Adaptation**

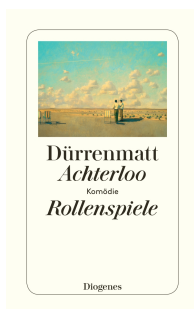
**1963: The Visit**  
Director: Bernhard Wicki  
Cast: Ingrid Bergmann, Anthony Quinn, Hans-Christian Blech

**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



**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

**1959: Der Besuch der alten Dame**  
Director: Ludwig Cremer  
Cast: R. Wanka, E. Flickenschildt, A. Schradiek

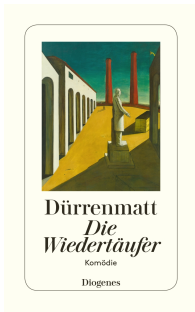
**1958: Es geschah am helllichten Tag**  
Director: Ladislao Vajda  
Screenplay: Friedrich Dürrenmatt  
Cast: Heinz Rühmann, Michel Simon, Gert Fröbe

**1957: Die Panne**  
Director: Fritz Umgelter  
Cast: Peter Ahrweiler, Carl Wery, Harry Hardt

**1957: Der Richter und sein Henker**  
Director: Franz Peter Wirth  
Cast: Herbert Tiede, Maria Körber, K.G. Saebisch

**Praise**

*The Visit*



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Die Wiedertäufer*  
Komödie  
Diogenes

The Anabaptists  
144 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**



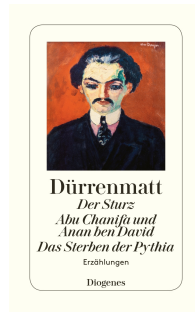
**Dürrenmatt**  
*Urfaust Woyzeck*  
Bearbeitungen  
Diogenes

Urfaust/ Woyzeck.  
Adaptations  
208 pages  
1980



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

Theater  
272 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Der Sturz*  
*Abu Chanifa und Anan ben David*  
*Das Sterben der Pythia*  
Erzählungen  
Diogenes

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



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Romulus der Große*  
Ungeschichtliche historische Komödie  
Diogenes

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



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

The Complete Prose Oeuvre  
3024 pages  
1980



**Dürrenmatt**  
*Play Strindberg*  
*Portrait eines Planeten*  
Übersetzungen für Schauspielerei  
Diogenes

Politics  
192 pages  
1980



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

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



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

The Physicists  
96 pages  
1980  
 **Movie Adaptation**



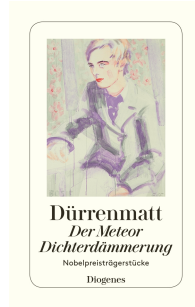
**Dürrenmatt**  
*Der Mitmacher*  
Ein Komplex  
Diogenes

Philosophical Essays  
208 pages  
1980



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

The Conformist  
336 pages  
1980



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

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



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

Literature and Painting  
240 pages  
1980



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

Reviews  
176 pages  
1980



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

## Praise (cont'd)

» ... one of the most stimulating and engrossing of all the plays written since World War II.« – Clive Barnes / The New York Times

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

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

»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

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

»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



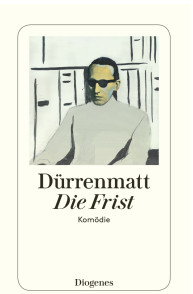
**Hercules and the Augean Stables/ The Trial about the Donkey's Shadow**  
240 pages  
1980



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



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



**The Deadline**  
160 pages  
1980



**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

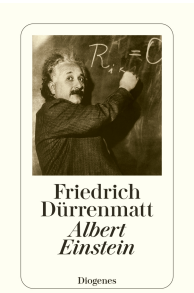
**Movie Adaptation**



**The Complete Dramatic Oeuvre**  
3408 pages  
1980



**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

**Praise (cont'd)**

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