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TRACTATUS PHILOSOPHICO-POETICUS
by Signe Gjessing

Translated from the Danish
by Denise Newman

Tractatus Philosophico-Poeticus
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An exquisite, lyrical reimagining of Wittgenstein's philosophical work of 1922, from a rising star on par with Inger Christensen

Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, often noted as the most important philosophical work of the 20th century, had a broad goal: to identify the relationship between language and reality, and to define the limits of science.

Following on from Wittgenstein 100 years later, Signe Gjessing updates and reimagines the *Tractatus*, marrying poetry with philosophy to test the boundaries of reality. Stunning, knowing, and revitalising, and glinting with stars, silk, and ecstasy, this is poetry which exacts the logical consequence of philosophy, while locating beauty and significance in the nonsense of the world.

SIGNE GJESSING (b. 1992) is a Danish poet. She graduated from the Danish Academy of Creative Writing, *Forfatterskolen*, in 2014. She has published several collections of poetry and a novella, and is the recipient of numerous awards and prizes, including the prestigious Bodil & Jørgen Munch Christensen Prize for emerging writers. *Tractatus Philosophico-Poeticus* is her first work to appear in English.

DENISE NEWMAN is a poet and translator based in San Francisco. She is the author of five poetry collections and the translator of *Azorno* and *The Painted Room* by Inger Christensen, and by Naja Marie Aidt, *Baboon*, winner of the PEN Translation Award, and *When Death Takes Something From You Give It Back: Carl's Book*, a semi-finalist for the National Book Award.

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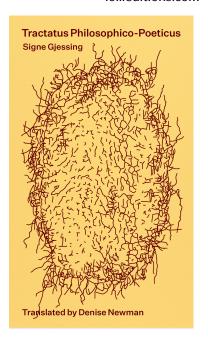lollieditions.com

PRAISE FOR *TRACTATUS PHILOSOPHICO-POETICUS*

'Fuelled both by logic and intuition, luxuriance and clarity, ecstasy and precision, this long poem unfurls, fractal-like, to amass moments of confounding, generative insight and beauty.'
– Ralf Webb

'Signe Gjessing's highly original reconfiguration of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* unfolds at once logically and lyrically on the trembling cusp where philosophy and poetry intersect. Her witty, haunting propositions shimmer between the profound and the puzzling, and beautifully enact Wallace Stevens's assertion that "Life's nonsense pierces us with strange relation."'
– Mark Ford

'Signe Gjessing is a wild voice in new Danish poetry, always closely connected to the symbolic tradition and cosmos.'
– Naja Marie Aidt

'Gjessing finds poetry and freedom in the philosopher's restrictive lexicon: "3.121111 Worlds are roses in a children's edition." The book, however, is wilder and more generous than a straightforward satirical pastiche. It generalises without being bland, condenses without being narrow, and philosophises without being poetical… An enchanting pocketbook, both mind-bending and mind-straightening.'
– Kit Fan, *The Guardian*

'With a wry smile, Gjessing responds to Wittgenstein, just as Wittgenstein himself responded to Spinoza before her. It is this willingness to challenge a canonical work, to invite the reader into this rebellious poetic space, that means that Gjessing's work can no less stand alone in (this, and a multitude of other) possible worlds.'
– Joshua Calladine-Jones, *Hong Kong Review of Books*

'Signe Gjessing is Wittgenstein plus rapture. In her reimagining of the *Tractatus*, poetry is a verb; an action to be found in transgressions and transitions. Like a silken butterfly emerging from its cocoon.'
– *Information*

'Gjessing is not a political poet in the traditional sense, and it is easy to be dazzled by the uplifting beauty of her poems. But it is also possible to read a more abstract political dimension into her *Tractacus* and regard it as a poetic ontology – as a politics on a larger, more cosmic level. This is poetry about how we organise the spaces we enter – viable and impossible, concretely or in the mind.'
– *ATLAS*