Uwe Johnson
Anniversaries - From The Life of Gesine Cresspahl

Sold to

English world rights (New York Review of Books Classics), France (Gallimard), Italy (L’Orma), Netherlands (Van Oorschot), Denmark (Vandkunsten), Macedonia (Ars Lamina)

About

In Anniversaries, Uwe Johnson develops a unique panorama of German history in the 20th century – a »literary world trip« (Reinhard Baumgart) that starts with the story of a German family in the Weimar Republic of the 1920s and continues to the eventful year of 1968 in New York.

Over the course of one year, Gesine Cresspahl narrates her family’s history to her ten-year-old daughter. Day by day, she reveals more about life in Mecklenburg during the years of the Weimar Republic, during the Nazi-rule and the subsequent Soviet occupation, as well as during the first years of the German Democratic Republic. At the same time, the novel depicts the daily life of mother and daughter in the midst of student demonstrations and Vietnam War protests in the cultural metropolis that is New York in the epochal year of 1967/1968.

Praise

»It is - among many other things - a book about the city as seen by a poet with a wayward eye and prose to match. Lingering on the texture of a surface, he can turn the most familiar sight into a revelation. [...] Johnson’s prose defies translation: that he survives at all is a minor miracle. One would desperately wish for a major one, because Johnson in the original can be superb. [...] Reading Uwe Johnson in English is better than not reading him at all, because even in this less than perfect version he comes across as an uncommonly original and provocative voice.« The New York Times Book Review