



Theodor Storm's weighty anthology was without its paper dust cover, its fabric binding adorned with a beautiful print of an oil painting: a woman standing in a tired pose, her clothing puffed out in the wind. Before her undulated a golden field, where women in similar dress were bent over crops, weeding or harvesting.



I designed and built the Sockel for an installation in which one hardcover volume – an anthology called *Theodor Storm: Am Grauen Meer* – was clapped open atop a pile of some other, important fictional works.

To different degrees, the books under *Am Grauen Meer* connected me to my homes across the Atlantic; a friend's copy of *Mumin's Wundersame Inselabenteurer, To Kill a Mockingbird, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, A Bend in the River* from V.S. Naipaul, Earl Lovelace's *Salt*, and *Omeros* from Derek Walcott.



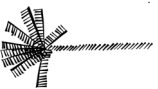
The year 2015 brought my first art school woodworking project, a Sockel made of heavy MDF board and painted Alpine white.

A couple years later, Elvira found *Salt* on the street outside of Katharina's apartment. Miriam found *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and returned it to me.

On glossy pages which interrupted the creamy matte chastity of *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Aquis Submersus*, the volume included several relatively high-quality prints of landscape paintings from from the 19th and 20th century.

These included Emil Nolde's *Windmühlen an der Marsch*, Caspar David Friedrich's *Monch am Meer* (which I had just seen in Berlin), and Max Beckmann's *Leute nach der Arbeit am Meer* (*Am Strand von Wangerooge*).

To get *Theodor Storm: Am Grauen Meer* to sit right, I had to keep it open on *Monch am Meer*. I threw off the weight of the pile if I tried to open the book on Nolde's windmills, which reminded me of palm trees, and I also had to forego the familiar tropical dread of Karl Hagemeister's *Brandende See bei Rügen*.



At the Vernissage, David S. said, "I never cared for Caspar David Friedrich."

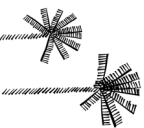
After the semester ended, I left the installation out, in the foyer of my studio. Because it was beautiful, powerful. Absolutely spectacular and sacred, of course. It was on its white Sockelli

Over the summer, this foyer became a dusty, grimy kind of half-kitchen. Some of the books were stolen – I was especially sad about the Earl Lovelace, and the *Mumin* paperback was expensive to replace. No one touched *Theodor Storm*, except to close the book, and set it aside.



By the end of the summer, the sculptor in the studio next to mine was using my Sockel in her workshop for refugees – its perfect 90° edges were sawn into, its cheap, fragile MDF corners smashed. It was covered in dark smears.

I think that I left it in the building when I moved studios, and it was eventually destroyed.



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