

Dr. Sabira Stahlberg

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**Desert/ed Trail. A journey into unknown, forgotten and lost languages
in Eurasia with the polyglot author Sabira Stahlberg**

Sabira Stahlberg, PhD, is probably the most polyglot writer of our time. Her poetic works contain dozens of both modern and ancient languages, and she mixes and experiments, combines and disassembles codes, scripts and languages on all levels of language, from the phonetic to the semantic. In her academic work, Sabira has written extensively on historical, cultural and linguistic encounters in Central Asia, Siberia, the Volga region and the Balkans, and as a poet she uses her knowledge of both living and extinct languages to create unique poems with messages, references, inferences and understanding that go far beyond the aesthetic or linguistic levels discernible through any ordinary Western scientific or literary analysis. In the Desert/ed Trail reading, Sabira embarks on a journey through Eurasia, discovering trails and traces of unknown, forgotten and lost languages, scripts and codes. She explores the existing knowledge and understanding of their background and present roles, connections and heritage, the processes of fanning out, thriving and finally fading into the shadows, and being lost in the desert sands of history. Following deserted trails back into the near and distant past, and the future of endangered languages, the journey is characterised by scientific and poetic methods, extensive code – switching on all levels, and graphic and audio expressions. The Desert/ed Trail awakens memories of lost or forgotten languages also in the personal history of the poet, and challenges the listeners to look for their own language trails, their use of codes and their multiple switches both in the past and the present.