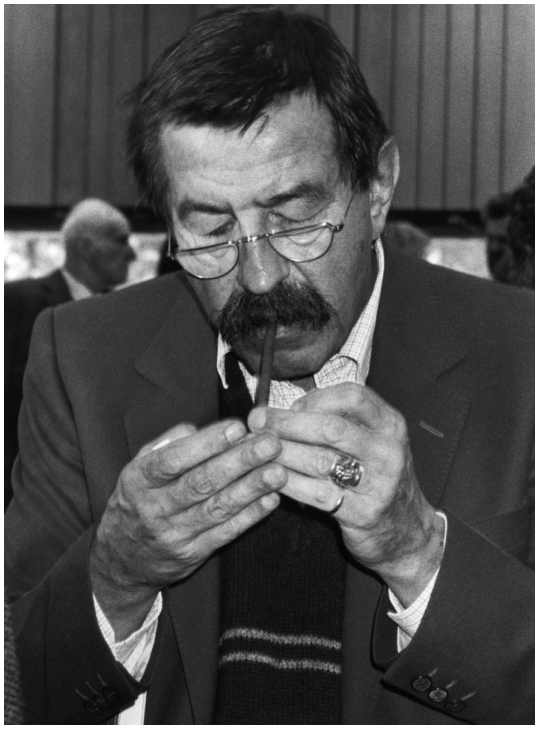
Günter Grass (1988)

Abstract

In 1959, Günter Grass (1927–2015) published *Die Blechtrommel* [*The Tin Drum*], which centers on the character of Oskar Matzerath, who witnesses the rise and development of National Socialism and World War II from the perspective of a child who has the perception of an adult and refuses to grow tall. Much of Grass's work engaged with the past, particularly the impact of National Socialism and World War II on West German society. A native of the Free City of Danzig, now Gdańsk in Poland, he also addressed the experience of flight and expulsion from the East during and after the war. Grass was an outspoken supporter of the Social Democratic Party, which he left in 1993 due to his opposition to the party's failure to prevent the undermining of the right to asylum granted by the German Basic Law. Considered to be a member of the Flakhelfer generation, he revealed in 2006 that he had volunteered for active duty as a fifteen-year-old schoolboy in his hometown of Danzig and served as a member of the Waffen-SS in the final months of the war. The revelation highlighted that Grass was grappling with his own guilt and role in Nazi Germany at a deeper personal level than the public had previously known.

Source



Source: Günter Grass, German writer, graphic artist, and sculptor. Date: 1988. Location: West Berlin. Photo: Oskar Dahlke.
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Recommended Citation: Günter Grass (1988), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:image-5071> [September 11, 2026].