

Christian W. Thomsen

Neue Zweite Blicke / New Second Glances

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When Christian W. Thomsen moved from Marburg to Siegen in 1973 to take up a professorship in English Studies, later also Media Studies, at the old "Gesamthochschule", the precursor of the present university, and was appointed its youngest founding senator, he could not have imagined in his wildest dreams that he would develop an allegiance to the town and the Siegerland that would last more than 40 years. In spite of visiting professorships in numerous countries and the attempts of universities at home and abroad to lure him away, he put down roots in Siegen and opted for the Siegerland ahead of a lot of other landscapes.

And when he published the first volume of *Second Glances* in 2010, he could never have foreseen the overwhelming success the book would meet with. It was sold out within a very short time and right up to the present day the calls for a reprint have persisted. But Thomsen decided in favour of a volume of *New Second Glances* instead, because deep inside he felt another big batch of illustrated, personal stories waiting to see the light of day.

Never in the past decades has Siegen seen such radical changes. The town is throbbing with vitality. The town centre is being given a new face, the river that gave the town its name is being rediscovered and given a promenade for leisurely strolls and recreation. The university is developing a totally new dynamism, both on the Haardter Berg and the "Old Town Campus". And this time it is not the big domestic industries which form the focus but examples of innovative medium-sized companies, like "Hees Bürowelt", and small, independent trades such as the Frank Bakery in Geisweid and the signage firm of Rudolph Siegen GmbH, which collaborates with the world's greatest light artists, or the Hadems' unique retreat for the elderly in Kreuztal. Also featured with copious illustrations are the new autobahn church – an architectural highlight on the A45 at Wilnsdorf –, as well as the fascinating renovation of the Upper Castle and its Gardens and a lot of natural greenery. Not forgetting various whimsical oddities.

But see for yourself. The book is not only aimed at all those who were so enthusiastic about the first volume. Richly illustrated and artistically designed, this bilingual combination of texts and photography is an ideal present for Siegerland folk at home and abroad, for firms and institutions and for anyone who has a soft spot for the Siegerland and would like to get to know it more intimately than the classic city guides allow.