

The Indian EXPRESS

JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

LATE CITY | CHANDIGARH | FRIDAY | JANUARY 6 | 2006 | 24 PAGES | Rs. 15

DELHI | JAMMU | KOLKATA | LUCKNOW | MUMBAI | NAGPUR | NEW YORK (WEEKLY) | PUNE | VADODARA

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STORIES find him, chase him, he writes for he remembers, he writes of incidents and people that are etched in his mind, memories that refuse to fade. Stories (Night Play, collection of eight stories), essays (The bacon-hunter), play (Rebels), biography, Austrian writer Andreas Weber, has penned it all, and now, his dream — of writing a novel, has come true in the form of Lanz, which has topped the best books list in Austria for many weeks. “Novel is the greatest challenge. You have to start from the very beginning always, and always strive to make it absorbing,” smiles Andreas, who’s worked as a teacher and journalist and has also made documentary films. Lanz, says Andrea, is based on a true incident which happened when he was only ten years old. “Had it on my mind ever since. It’s about a woman

Andreas Weber is always somewhere in his writings

Story of I...

who was tortured at the end of World War II and those who committed the crime come to face with who they think is the son of that woman,” explains Andreas, who’s been influenced the most by Hemingway.

To commemorate the event of Austria taking over the presidency of the European Union on January 5, the Embassy of Austria in India, Saar Sansaar, Indo-German Friendship Society and Alliance Francaise, organised an interaction with Andreas. Ask Andreas how he feels about it and he tells you candidly that such unions are more business and political oriented and there’s not much in the cultural context that happens. “But I guess, they can try to make it as good as possible for everyone and ensure that not only a few benefit,” says the author.

So does politics feature prominently in his writings? “Well, I am a very political person, head to toe, but I don’t write political prose,” says the charming Andreas, whose writings feature issues which effect him directly, social causes, justice, his experiences. “I don’t have a literary background, my love for writing made me a journalist and then a full-time writer. I see writing professionally as a form of living and am privileged, as I can live on it,” adds Andreas, whose novel Lanz, has been translated into Hindi by Dr Amrit Lal Mehta, editor of Saar Sansaar.

Andreas’s made a film on Fritz Habeck, the pen friend of Hemingway, and also many Austrian writers, and is currently busy writing his second novel and completing a film on soccer legend Mario Kempis. “I like to stick to the conventional style of writing and film-making and in almost all my works, I write something about myself,” he pronounces.



PHOTO: JASBIR MALHI