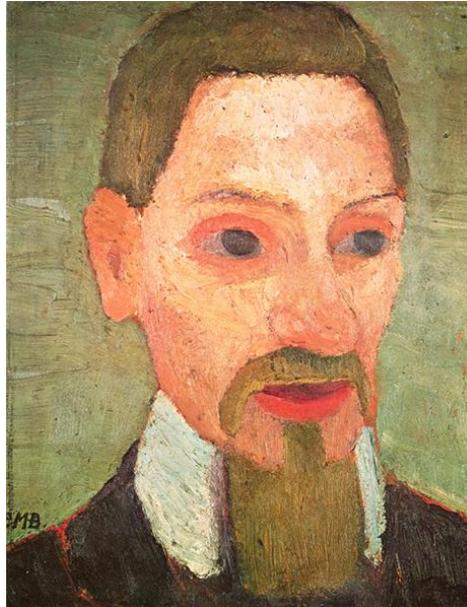


# The Poetics of Personhood

The Parlour, Magdalene College Cambridge, 22 September 2017



The specific status of the individual human creature has been defined in a multitude of ways since the beginning of history and probably before. This persistent need for a functioning support in language for the entity upon which society and morality are founded is encapsulated in the word 'person'. 'Person' refers to the individual body of the creature but also that body's place in the network of meanings through which a given society orders itself. As a word, it lacks secure referential anchorage, not only because how the 'person' is defined, and who qualifies as one, change over time and place, but because this need for definition has to operate in between the body and social organisation. It faces two ways, as it were, combining the consciousness of the embodied self with the shared currencies of conscious society. This double meaning is suggested by the historical and etymological link between the word person and the word for mask.

The interest that this workshop is intended to serve is to test the resonance of the word 'person' today by looking again at its history in literature and especially lyric poetry. The focus is on lessons to be learned from these honest and uncorrupted language practices. These lessons, it is to be hoped, would be relevant to the actual life, the reality, of the enigma of personhood in a possible future.

Convenors: Michael Minden (Cambridge), Annja Neumann (Cambridge), Leonard Olschner (Queen Mary University of London)

## Programme

Friday, 22 September 2017

10.30 – 11.00 Tea & Coffee

11.00 Welcome and Introduction

Annja Neumann (Cambridge): Line break to Verse break: Personhood and performance in Celan's poetics

11.30 Katie Fleming (Queen Mary University of London): Tragic Persona: Greek tragedy, philosophy and the construction of the self

12.15 Peter Hughes (Cambridge): 'Being Frank' – an exploration of poetics and voice through creative versions of Petrarch's sonnets

13.00 Lunch

14.00 Ellen Pilsworth (University College London): 'Gezwungner Scherz': Pain and play in Anna Louisa Karsch's *Sapphische Lieder* (1761–62)

14.45 Marie Kolkenbrock (Cambridge): Of Poses and Postures: Arthur Schnitzler's literary anthropology

15.15 Michael Minden (Cambridge): Person to Person: The exchange of presence between Modersohn-Becker and Rilke.

16.00 Tea & Coffee

16.30 Ian Cooper (University of Kent): The Only One: Poetry and the second person

17.15 Leonard Olschner (Queen Mary University of London): *marmorne Maske*: On voices and origins in Rilke's Sonnet 'O Brunnen-Mund, du gebender'

18.00 Annie Ring (University College London): Erfahrung and Einfühlung in Wolfgang Hilbig's poetry

18.45 Wine Reception