The Way an Ostrich Regards Its Wings
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Thorvald Steen
Photo: Trine Hisdal

The Way an Ostrich Regards Its Wings

The Way an Ostrich Regards Its Wings is Thorvald Steen's seventh collection of poetry: a book-length poem about running, marathoner Grete Waitz, and death. The poem begins with the speaker's admiration for Waitz. Living with a muscular disease, he takes up running on his doctor's advice, hoping to slow the degeneration of his muscle cells, and models his running style on hers. There is something almost desperate in the attempt. Later, when Waitz herself falls ill and refuses to hide it, he finds himself following her example in this, too.

In *The Way an Ostrich Regards Its Wings*, Steen weaves personal experience together with recent history. Narrative, biography, and vivid imagery come together in a form that feels both original and unexpected. The collection has clear affinities with his previous poetry book, *The Halibut*, which Jan Erik Vold called "an original collection of poetry unlike anything else we have in Norwegian." (Dag og Tid)

Thorvald Steen is a genre unto himself. [...] He has, and has always had, an utterly unique voice. He has a great deal to say, and, my goodness, does he know how to say it... [...] Throughout his career, Thorvald Steen has shown us that he is a storyteller of the highest order. With this collection, he takes yet another step toward becoming Thorvald Steen: a genre entirely his own.

Nettavisen, 6/6 stars

Thorvald Steen

Thorvald Steen's (b. 1954) literary career began in 1983, and he has since produced a diverse body of work spanning a variety of genres. Translated into 30 languages so far, Steen has received praise and prizes for the quality of his authorship in Norway and abroad. Most recently, he was appointed a Knight 1st Class in the Royal Norwegian Order of Saint Olav. His latest novel, *The Valet*, was published in English and Swedish in 2026.