“In After Strange Gods, that notorious tract from the days when my mind first took form, T.S. Elliot makes a point of elucidating what the term tradition meant to him. He has wished, he says, “to use the word to cover much in our lives that is accounted for by habit, breeding and environment.” My people, the Volk of my provenance, were just then making ready to rush into battle as if they were the Nibelungen, destined for the conflagration in Tetzels great hall, Krimhildes bloody vengeance. Tradition - the truism took us to the point truth. Stunde Null, we said, the Hour Zero of our deliverance. Der Spuk war vorbei. The madness was over. On the morning after, the ten year-old boy who had stood through the night in the snow with the adults, watching Dresden burn, would stand alone on a pile of rubble, looking out over the devastation before him in the blinding sunlight and the eerie silence of the day. The rubble lies there still in the back of his mind, with nothing to elucidate it for him. That in a nutshell is the story of the life I’ve lived. For roughly twenty years now I’ve lived to write it, but all I’ve got so far is a pile of breakage. True enough to the rubble of origin, so why not leave it there? That’s the question I raise in the prologue I have now been writing. Foreplay to nothing I may never pull together, I’m prepared to say. After gods too strange for words. It was only when cancer struck some three years ago, a rare and aggressive blood cancer, that I began to learn a hard lesson. Grim diagnosis, no cure, little chance of remission. Against all odds I’m in remission for the second time as I write. Perhaps I’ll never get a handle on the life, but the idea that the rubble of my native memory is malignant, bösertig, of the kind that is evil, that’s what the cancer disabused me of.”

For Ulf Goebel’s presentation, he will recite a poem he wrote in response to the former Sunset Project, “a celebration of the beauties of a firestorm mimicking a spectacular sunset,” and then read from his writing “Into the Good Night: Notes to the Enigma of Origin,” elucidating what it needs as he goes along. Böse? You decide.