

Press Release of the Haus für Poesie

21 June 2019

20th poesiefestival berlin finishes with record attendance



Weltklang – Night of Poetry

Walt Whitman: Leaves of Grass – A staging



Giorgio Agamben

Eileen Myles

photos: Mirko Lux

The **20th poesiefestival berlin** (June 14 – 20) finished successfully with a record attendance yesterday. On seven days 13.000 visitors came to the Academy of the Arts (Akademie der Künste) at Hanseatenweg to experience 150 artists from 25 countries and to get an insight into the contemporary poetry scene.

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Haus_
für_
Poesie

Haus für Poesie, the organizer, curated, together with 62 partners, over 50 exquisite poetry events. The Minister of State for Culture and the Media, Prof. **Monika Grütters** opened the festival.

On the vernissage of the festival exhibition **Aubergine with Windscreen Wiper – The Drawings of Oskar Pastior, Herta Müller** gave a speech: "The drawing [...] is free, it is open. It reveals something different for each different eye. It is the same with Pastior's texts. You read the poem whilst the poem is reading you."

Weltklang – Night of Poetry gathered eight poets, who gave readings in six languages. With flashlights the audience was able to read along in German translations.

The non-binary underground poet **Eileen Myles** from New York caused a rush of visitors. As a first-hand witness **Edmund White** shared his experience of the Stonewall riot 50 years ago, which is being commemorated on Christopher Street Day each year.

The philosopher **Giorgio Agamben** spoke in a forum on hate speech and poetic resistance.

The **Berliner Rede zur Poesie** (Berlin Poetry Lecture) was held by **Sergio Raimondi** from Argentina. His text **Problems with Writing an Ode to the Pacific Ocean** explored – through a dialogue with **Theodor W. Adorno** – how poetry can give a contemporary response to the global streams of data and goods.

The staging of **Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass** (by **Leopold von Verschuer** in the translation by **Jürgen Brôcan**) exposed the astoundingly contemporary nature of the text.

The 20th poesiefestival berlin is a project of the Haus für Poesie in co-operation with the Akademie der Künste. Sponsored by funding from the Hauptstadtkulturfonds (Capital City Cultural Fund) and the German Foreign Ministry, with the kind assistance of the Maritim proArte Hotel Berlin. Presented by taz, BÜCHERmagazin, tip Berlin, ASK HELMUT and Deutschlandfunk Kultur.

14.–20.6.2019

20th poesiefestival berlin: Finally Time for Language

Akademie der Künste

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Press photos for download:

<https://www.haus-fuer-poesie.org/en/press/press-photos/>

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