

Press Release from the Haus für Poesie

7th May 2020

Weltklang – this year produced AND broadcast worldwide OPENING of the poesiefestival berlin with 9 poets in 7 languages

The online edition of the **poesiefestival berlin (5 – 11 June) #planetpgoeson** is making it possible for the first time for **Weltklang – Night of Poetry**, the big annual opening of the festival, to have a worldwide audience. The première will be broadcast at **7.30 pm on 5 June** on the festival's Facebook page and the YouTube channel of the Haus für Poesie, as well as on the festival site poesiefestival.org.

The nine poets taking part, **Mircea Cărtărescu** (Romania), **Michael Donhauser** (Austria), **Athena Farrokhzad** (Iran & Sweden) with musician **Christian Kesten** (Germany), **Yanko González** (Chile), **Luljeta Lleshanaku** (Albania), **Koleka Putuma** (South Africa) with musician **Tracy September** (South Africa & Switzerland), **Ariana Reines** (USA), **Katharina Schultens** (Germany) and **Yi Won** (South Korea), demonstrate the richness of contemporary poetry in all its diversity of content, approaches and styles. In this time of the pandemic their poems deal explicitly in places with the subject of 'state of emergency'. Sitting at home before their computer screens they have spoken, sung and performed their texts in seven native languages, and now post-production is underway in Berlin. Literary critic **Insa Wilke** will be our guide through the evening. Those of the online audience able to read German will, as always, be able to follow the poems with German versions.

Overview of the poets taking part



Mircea Cărtărescu (born in 1956 in Bucharest) is an undisputedly world-class writer of prose. His poetry, on the other hand, is an undiscovered treasure trove. They are texts which have deliberately not been written with a politely hooked little finger; they are monomaniacal and eager for life, always politically incorrect and saturated with the fat of experience.

Photo: Barna Nemethi



The poems of **Michael Donhauser** (born in 1956 in Vaduz, Lichtenstein) use small gestures bound together with musicality to negotiate the large themes: tenderness, contemporaneity, transitoriness, where the poetic ego is more a filter than an instance interpreting the world. What results is, in the poet's words, "a shimmering of syllables an inimitable saying".

Photo: Stefan Scherhauser



Athena Farrokhzad (born in 1983 in Iran) lives in Stockholm and writes in Swedish. In her work she blends poetic, political and conceptual processes. Questions of migration and revolution, racism, heritage and assimilation are negotiated in her poems in an almost scenic manner. For *Weltklang*, Farrokhzad is performing together with the vocalist Christian Kesten.

Photo: Khashayar Naderehvandi



Yanko González's (born in 1971 in Santiago de Chile) work is a milestone in the Chilean tradition after the end of the dictatorship. His poems are rooted in oral tradition and explore the margins of society. He experiments with sociolects and parodies academic jargon. By his own account he wants to write texts for people and not erect mausoleums that exclude the reader.

Photo: Carsten Maltendorf



Luljeta Lleshanaku (born in 1968 in Elbasan) almost single-handedly revived Albanian poetry after the end of the Hoxha dictatorship. She has radically excised from her poems everything that was contaminated with Stalinism in her country. Her poems are profound, simple and hypnotic, like "arabesques waking from sleep."

Photo: Soela Zani



Koleka Putuma (born in 1993 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa) instantly conquered the South African literary scene as a playwright and Spoken Word artist. Her poems dissect concepts of authority. They speak of inequality and violence – directly, powerfully and vehemently. Pain and joy, mourning and memory, love and sex all have their place in them.

Photo: Mawande Sobehtwa



Ariana Reines' (born in 1982 in Salem, Massachusetts) poems are brimming with untamed grrl wildness, leaping out at readers. They are dominated by overwhelming physicality. Reines writes about the violence done by humans to animals and by men to women, and makes the wounds visible on the body of language itself: "glvovrme. Brns; ozne."

Photo: Elka Krajewska Studio



Katharina Schultens (born in 1980 in Kirchen (Sieg)) combines in her poems technical jargon with dark romanticism, anger with hope, political analysis with deeply personal imagery. In lines that seem to unfold organically like hitherto unknown plant forms the perception of the reader is palpated, dissected and reconstituted.

Haus für Poesie
Knaackstr. 97, 10435 Berlin
Tel: +49. 30. 485245 – 0
www.haus-fuer-poesie.org

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Yi Wons (born in 1968 in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi-do) writes poems that seduce her readers into a surreal world of monstrous body fantasies. They are dystopian fever visions in which human and machine merge, transplanted glass fibre electrodes send wireless signals into the world and cybernetic organisms take over the writing and reviewing of poems.

Photo: Dirk Skiba

Photo: Bong Hyung Kang

FR 5 June 7.30 pm | Video
WELTKLANG – NIGHT OF POETRY

Facebook: poesiefestivalberlin
YouTube: hausfuerpoesie
poesiefestival.org

Project Manager: Alexander Gumz | Matthias Kniep

Weltklang – Night of Poetry acknowledges the kind support of the Federal Foreign Office, the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme, the Kulturstiftung Schloss Wiepersdorf, the Swedish Embassy and the Austrian Culture Forum Berlin.

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The poesiefestival berlin has been taking place since 2000 and is the biggest of its kind in Europe. As well as the book, poetry has long sought other forms of presentation and experiments with theatre, performance, music, dance, film and digital media. The festival enables poetry to be experienced in all its diversity of forms and welcomes up to 13,000 visitors each year. For the first time in its 21-year history, it is taking place as a purely online festival.

The 21st poesiefestival berlin is a project by the Haus für Poesie. Funded by the Capital Cultural Fund and with the kind support of the Federal Foreign Office, the Government of Canada, the Embassy of Canada to Germany, the Ministère des Relations internationales et de la Francophonie du Québec, the Québec Government Office in Germany, as well as Federal Agency for Civic Education. Presented by Der Freitag, taz, BÜCHERmagazin, tip Berlin, rbbKultur, ASK HELMUT, iHeartBerlin, EXBERLINER and Deutschlandfunk Kultur.

FRI 5 – THU 11 June 2020
21st poesiefestival berlin: Planet P
Online Edition #planetpgoeson

Social Media

Facebook [poesiefestivalberlin](#)
Instagram [hausfuerpoesie](#)

Website

haus-fuer-poesie.org/
poesiefestival.org

Press images

haus-fuer-poesie.org/en/press/press-photos/

For enquiries and information

Haus für Poesie
Silvia Jackson
Head of Media and Public Relations
Tel: 030. 48 52 45 24
Email: presse@haus-fuer-poesie.org