



PRESS KIT

2019 Goethe Medal

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PRESS RELEASE

DOĞAN AKHANLI, SHIRIN NESHAT AND ENKHBAT ROOZON AWARDED THE GOETHE MEDALS

Today, the Goethe Medals were presented on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 270th birthday in a ceremony attended by about 200 international guests in Weimar. The honours went to the German-Turkish writer Doğan Akhanlı, the Iranian artist and filmmaker Shirin Neshat and the Mongolian publisher and political journalist Enkhbat Roozon. Every year the Goethe-Institut confers the official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany to honour figures who have performed outstanding service for international cultural dialogue.

The Goethe Medals were presented under this year's title "Truth and Fiction" by the president of the Goethe-Institut **Klaus-Dieter Lehmann**. In his opening address, Lehmann emphasised, "With this year's laureates Shirin Neshat, Doğan Akhanlı and Enkhbat Roozon, we are honouring personalities who, through their work, address the conflicting poles of social reality between influence and autonomy, ignorance and culture of debate, unknowing and education, regardless of possible personal disadvantages or risks. They are exceptional examples of dedicated, responsible cultural understanding that enables new thought processes, identifies alternatives and trusts the power of culture. They are sensitive in their perception and strong in their message. Their credibility is based on their independence, not political activism."

The presentation was held in the presence of **Peter Kleine**, the mayor of the city of Weimar, **Benjamin-Immanuel Hoff**, Thuringian Minister for Culture, Federal and European Affairs and Head of the State Chancellery, and **Andreas Görgen**, Head of the Directorate-General for Culture and Communication at the Federal Foreign Office.

The first vice president of the Goethe-Institut and chair of the Goethe Medal Conferment Commission, **Christina von Braun**, stressed prior to the award ceremony, "The Goethe Medal honours outstanding laureates whose works demonstrate the central role played by culture in international exchange. Whether literature, fine arts, political and educational publications or films: their work is open to trans-national and trans-societal dialogue that wakes people up and creates relationships."

In his novels, essays and plays as well as with his political commitment, the writer **Doğan Akhanlı** has supported international understanding for many years, especially between Armenians, Turks and Kurds. In her laudatory speech, the literary critic **Insa Wilke** said, "He does not write political literature but writes politically. This is one of the greatest skills in literature, a risky one because it ignores the mentalities of the market. It is rare. Still rarer is when a writer leaves the space between the book covers and sets alongside his literary work performative, indeed, cultural policy work, trying in a second way to express his insights. In old-fashioned terms: to make a difference, to change something. (...) The way Goethe grasped time is no longer valid. Wanting to understand what Doğan Akhanlı tells us about time would be the beginning of a new one." In his moving acceptance speech, Doğan Akhanlı recalled that our present day is still determined by repressions suffered by system-critical intellectuals, and said, "I happily accept the Goethe Medal and I



28 August 2019

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dedicate it in tribute to the imprisoned Cologne artist Hozan Cane, who like tens of thousands of other people has become a victim of state arbitrariness and arrogance in Turkey, including Ahmet Altan, Osman Kavala and Selahattin Demirtaş.”

In her films, videos and photographs, the artist **Shirin Neshat** knows how to effectively connect politics and poetry. Women of the Muslim world are at the centre of her artistic work, which she continues to develop despite the entry ban into her homeland. In her laudatory speech, the art scholar **Britta Schmitz** stated, “In her projects, Neshat focuses the visual discourse on historical and present-day social developments in Iran, whose shifts she seismographically notes because she has always understood herself as a political artist and is closely connected to the worldwide Iranian diaspora and exile community. (...) With all of the delicately and carefully conceived works, Shirin Neshat manages to create a unique narrative entanglement by producing haunting stories and images that are hard to forget and that transcend cultural boundaries.”

On behalf of the artist, who was not able to travel to Weimar, her close friend Vahideh Mahmoodi accepted the medal. Shirin Neshat accepted the award with a video message in which she expressed solidarity with the exiled community of all refugees in Germany.

The publisher, bookseller and journalist **Enkhbat Roozon** received the Goethe Medal for his courage and strength working indefatigably for an open, critical and responsible civil society in Mongolia. In particular, he works to improve the Mongolian education system with his publications. His laudatory speaker **Damian Miller**, a professor at the Pädagogische Hochschule Thurgau, noted, “Education, especially public education, is not a privilege but an indispensable condition of a democracy. (...) From the eighteenth century onward at the latest, public means an uncompromising obligation to accountability and discourse of all exercises of state power. For this, independent, free school – public – education is needed. Enkhbat Roozon dedicates his activity exactly to this commitment.”

Roozon accepted the Goethe Medal by outlining the current challenges of his homeland, which needs fundamental social change. He said, “The Mongols come from a centuries-old nomadic tradition that is perfectly adapted to our extreme climatic conditions. However, today’s challenges are increasingly different ones – they are social and political. In dealing with these new challenges, we can learn from Western cultures. By that I mean in particular the tradition of the European Enlightenment.”

For the award presentation, **musicians from the Franz Liszt School of Music’s Chair of Transcultural Musical Studies** performed pieces they composed especially for the event with musical references to each of the awardees. The programme was curated by Peter Lell and Tiago de Oliveira Pinto. The four-member ensemble consisted of Mehdi Aminian (ney), Emmanuel Hovhannisyan



(duduk), Nora Thiele (percussion) and Yessun-Erdene Bat (vocals and morin khuur).

The press kit on the awarding of the 2019 Goethe Medals can be found here:

www.goethe.de/pressemappen

Press photos of the 2019 awardees can be found at:

www.goethe.de/bilderservice

Information about the Goethe Medal and an overview of previous awardees:

www.goethe.de/goethe-medaille

Biographies of the 2019 awardees

Doğan Akhanlı, born in 1957 in Turkey, has lived in Cologne as a freelance author since 1992. Before fleeing to Germany, he was arrested several times in Turkey. He began to write in exile and has authored numerous novels and plays, in which he repeatedly advocates the truthful handling of historical violence, remembrance and the indivisibility of human rights. His trilogy *Kayıp Denizler* (The Seas That Disappeared) was published in the late 1990s. Its final volume *Kiyamet Günü Yargıçları* (Judges of Last Judgement) describes the 1915 genocide in Armenia. His novel *Madonna'nın Son Hayali* (Madonna's Last Dream, 2005, German version 2019) is about the sinking of a freighter carrying 700 Jewish refugees in the Black Sea in 1942 by a Russian submarine. His first play in German *Annes Schweigen* (Anne's Silence) premiered in Berlin in 2012 (Theater unterm Dach) and in Cologne in January 2013 (Theater im Bauturm). In addition to his writing, Akhanlı is actively involved in the dialogue between different cultures, ethnic groups and religions. In 2002, Akhanlı began offering German-Turkish guided tours in the former Gestapo prison in Cologne, spoke to Turkish youths about the persecution of the Jews during National Socialism and lectured on "Anti-Semitism in the immigrant society." In Berlin he launched the project Flight, Exile and Persecution. His latest book *Verhaftung in Granada oder: Treibt die Türkei in die Diktatur?* (Arrest in Granada or Is Turkey Heading to Dictatorship?) (2018) is about his 2017 arrest at the request of Turkey in Spain. Doğan Akhanlı was the 2018 recipient of the European Tolerance Award for Democracy and Human Rights.

Shirin Neshat, born in Iran in 1957, lives in New York where she works as an artist and filmmaker. In her work she deals with the lives of Muslim women in dictatorial regimes. Shirin Neshat grew up in a liberal, intellectual home during the reign of the Shah and studied art in the United States. With the Islamic revolution, the seizure of power by Ayatollah Khomeini and the severing of diplomatic relations between the US and Iran in 1979, she was denied a return to her homeland. She returned for the first time in 1990 and was shocked by the effects of the revolution – especially on the lives of women in Iran, whose public status compared to men was reduced. Under these impressions she created her first photographic series "Unveiling" (1993) and "Women of Allah" (1993-1997) – impressive, large-format black and white portraits of Muslim women. In them she subversively contrasts femininity, violence and poetry:



Some of the women wear the chador, other firearms, only their uncovered hands, eyes, feet and faces are covered in Persian calligraphy. Shirin Neshat's works are represented in many museum collections worldwide and she has had numerous solo exhibitions, including in Venice, Washington D.C., Seoul, Amsterdam, London, Berlin and Montréal. In 2009, Shirin Neshat won the Silver Lion at the Biennale Film Festival in Venice with her first feature film *Women Without Men*. In 2017, she made her debut as an opera director with a much-acclaimed production of Verdi's *Aida* at the Salzburg Festival. Shortly thereafter, she finished her second feature film *Looking for Oum Kulthum*, which tells of the life and artistic work of the most successful singer in the Middle East.

Enkhbat Roozon, born in Ulan Bator in 1958, is a Mongolian publisher, bookseller and political journalist. After studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig, he worked for several years as a photographer and head of the state-owned photo agency MonTsaMe. In 1996, he became self-employed with the Admon printing house and in 2000, he founded the Monsudar publishing house, which is now a leader in international fiction, dictionaries and children's books as well as modern teaching materials. In 2005, he set up the Internom chain of bookshops, the largest in the country. Through articles and interviews, as well as public events, Roozon campaigns in particular for the modernisation of the Mongolian education system and the strengthening of freedom of expression towards the political parties. As of today, neither an independent, diverse press landscape nor a critical public has been able to establish itself in Mongolia. Consolidating these standards is Roozon's central goal. His commitment is based on the conviction that social progress in Mongolia can only succeed on the basis of the values of the Enlightenment, recognising the autonomy and responsibility of each individual citizen. He considers promoting this the primary task of educational policy, for which he has been involved personally and journalistically for many years. In 2009, Enkhbat Roozon founded the NGO Davalgaa ("wave of education") and since 2017, he has been a member of the Educational Council of the Mongolian Presidential Office.

About the Goethe Medal

The Goethe Medal was established by the Executive Committee of the Goethe-Institut in 1954 and acknowledged as an official decoration by the Federal Republic of Germany in 1975. The conferment is held on 28 August, Goethe's birthday, in Weimar. The Goethe-Institut organises a fringe programme together with Kunstfest Weimar. Since it was first awarded in 1955, 351 people from 66 countries have been honoured, including Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Bourdieu, Sir Ernst Gombrich, Lars Gustafsson, Ágnes Heller, Petros Markaris, Sir Karl Raimund Popper, Jorge Semprún, Robert Wilson, Neil MacGregor, Yurii Andrukhovych and Irina Shcherbakova.

The Goethe Medal Conferment Commission

Franziska Augstein (journalist, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*), Christina von Braun (chair and representative of the executive committee, cultural scientist,



Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Meret Forster (editorial director, music, BR-Klassik), Anselm Franke (curator, division head Fine Arts and Film, Haus der Kulturen der Welt), Ina Hartwig (head of cultural affairs of the City of Frankfurt am Main, literary critic), Ursula von Keitz (film scholar, Filmuniversität Babelsberg Konrad Wolf), Ulrich Khuon (director, Deutsches Theater), Eva Menasse (writer), Elisabeth Ruge (author, publisher and literary agent), Moritz Müller-Wirth (journalist, Die Zeit); representing the Federal Foreign Office: Andreas Görden (head of the department of culture and communication at the Foreign Office); representing the Goethe-Institut: Klaus-Dieter Lehmann (president of the Goethe-Institut), Johannes Ebert (secretary-general of the Goethe-Institut)

Conferment of the 2019 Goethe Medals: Programme



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Wednesday, 28 August 2019, 11 AM: Award ceremony

Kleine Weimarhalle
in the congress centrum neue weimarhalle
UNESCO-Platz 1
99423 Weimar

Klaus-Dieter Lehmann
President of the Goethe-Institut

Welcoming address

Peter Kleine
Mayor of the City of Weimar

Opening address

Benjamin-Immanuel Hoff
Thuringian Minister for Culture, Federal and European Affairs and Head of the State
Chancellery

Opening address

Andreas Görden
Head of the Directorate-General for Culture and Communication at the Federal
Foreign Office

Opening address

Insa Wilke
Literary critic

Laudatory speech for Doğan Akhanlı

Conferment of the Goethe Medal to Doğan Akhanlı

and acceptance speech

Britta Schmitz
Photographer

Laudatory speech for Shirin Neshat

Shirin Neshat
Video message

Conferment of the Goethe Medal to **Vahideh Mahmoodi**

representing Shirin Neshat

and acceptance speech

Damian Miller
Lecturer in educational theory and psychology, Pädagogische Hochschule Thurgau

Laudatory speech for Enkhbat Roozon

Conferment of the Goethe Medal to Enkhbat Roozon

Musical programme

in cooperation with the Liszt School of Music Weimar



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PUBLIC PROGRAMME WITH THE AWARDEES AS PART OF KUNSTFEST WEIMAR

Monday, 26 August, 7 PM: “Democracy doesn’t grow on trees – how can people be encouraged?”

Discussion with Enkhbat Roozon and Marina Weisband moderated by Elisabeth Ruge

Place: *Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar, Theaterplatz 2, 99423 Weimar*

Language: *German*

In his work, the Mongolian publisher and entrepreneur Enkhbat Roozon is committed to promoting the autonomy and responsibility of every citizen, thereby strengthening freedom of opinion. He considers the reform and modernisation of the Mongolian educational system a basic requirement for this. Together with educational expert Marina Weisband, he will discuss encouraging self-responsibility and civilised debate in a democracy. How can democratic thinking and democratic skills be promoted? How can participation be strengthened? The discussion will also take the development of post-communist countries into account.

Tuesday, 27 August, 6:30 PM: *Madonnas letzter Traum*

Reading and conversation with Doğan Akhanlı and the chief dramaturge at UFA, Thomas Laue

Place: *Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Studienzentrum, Platz der Demokratie 4, 99423 Weimar*

Language: *German*

Writer Doğan Akhanlı, together with translator Recai Hallaç and an actor from the DNT ensemble, will read from his novel *Madonnas letzter Traum* published on 15 August 2019 in German (sujet verlag). The book remembers the ship Struma, which was sunk in the Black Sea in 1942, claiming the lives of 769 Jewish refugees. In a conversation with the chief dramaturge at UFA, Thomas Laue, Akhanlı offers personal insights into his eventful life, which is characterised by his commitment to human rights and the culture of remembrance. Akhanlı has been travelling to Armenia since 2005 to contribute to understanding between the Armenian, Turkish and Kurdish peoples.

With kind support from the Klassik Stiftung Weimar.

Wednesday, 28 August, 6 PM: *Looking for Oum Kulthum*

Film screening by Shirin Neshat followed by a conversation

Place: *Lichthaus Kino, Am Kirschberg 4, 99423 Weimar*

Language: *English and Arabic with German subtitles*

In Arabic countries, Oum Kulthum of Egypt is the most famous artist of the twentieth century. She is still revered there forty years after her death. With her striking voice and charisma she packed the big concert halls from the 1930s until the 1970s. In her second feature film, the Iranian artist and filmmaker Shirin Neshat combines the singer’s story of emancipation with the situation of women in today’s Muslim world.

Neshat, who made a name for herself with video installations and other art works and lives in exile, is considered a pioneer of Muslim feminism, calling for self-determined lives without male interference.

More information about the cultural programme at:

www.kunstfest-weimar.de/index.php?id=157

You can get press credentials for all three events from Frank Grobe at Kunstfest Weimar: Tel.: +49 (0) 3643 / 755 292 or contact presse@kunstfest-weimar.de



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About the 2019 awardees

DOĞAN AKHANLI

Novels (in Turkish)

- Ona Sevdiğimi Söyle. Olasılık, Ankara 2016 (Tell Them I Love You)
- Madonna'nın Son Hayali. Olasılık, Ankara 2015 (Madonna's Last Dream)
- Fasil. Telos, Istanbul 2010 (Fasil)
- Babasız Günler. Turkuvaz, Istanbul 2009 (Days without Father)
- Madonna'nın Son Hayali. Kanat, Istanbul 2005 (Madonna's Last Dream)
- Kayıp Denizler Üçlüsü. Belge, Istanbul 1999 (Judges of Last Judgement)
- Gelincik Tarlası. Belge, Istanbul 1999 (The Poppy Field)
- Denizi Beklerken. Belge, Istanbul 1998 (Waiting for the Sea)

Novels (in German)

- Annes Schweigen. (audiobook), KSG Produktion, Cologne 2016
- Tage ohne Vater. Translated by Önder Erdem. Kitab, Klagenfurt 2016 (original: Babasız Günler, Turkuvaz 1999)
- Die Richter des Jüngsten Gerichts. Translated by Hülya Engin. Kitab, Klagenfurt 2007, 2nd edition: 2010 (original: Kıyamet Günü Yargıçları, Belge 1999)
- Madonnas letzter Traum. Translated by Recai Hallaç. Sujet, August 2019 (original: Madonna'nın Son Hayali. Olasılık, Ankara 2015)

Other publications and essays (in German)

- Verhaftung in Granada oder Treibt die Türkei in die Diktatur? KIWI, Cologne 2018
- Armenien: Tabu und Trauma 1: Die Fakten im Überblick. By Martin Bitschnau (editor, author, foreword), Taner Akcam (author), Doğan Akhanlı (author), Hans-Lukas Kieser (author), Dominik Schaller (author) 2013
- Meine Geschichte – "Unsere" Geschichte. Guided tours in Turkish at the NS-Documentation Centre of Cologne (EL-DE-Haus). In Neue Judenfeindschaft? Perspektiven für den pädagogischen Umgang mit globalisiertem Antisemitismus. Jahrbuch 2006 des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Frankfurt 2006
- "Reisewege und Alpträume". In Armenier in Berlin – Berlin und Armenien. Tessa Hofmann (ed.), with essays by Doğan Akhanlı and Yelda, Senate Commissioner for Integration und Migration, Berlin 2005
- Köln International: Ein Stadtbuch gegen Rassismus, Antisemitismus und Rechtsextremismus. Edited by Doğan Akhanlı, Christiane Ensslin, Klaus Jünschke, Tanja Motzkau and Carmen Scholz. Edition der Andere Buchladen. Cologne 2002.

Play

- Annes Schweigen (Annenin Sessizliği). (Premiere: Theater unterm Dach Berlin. 2012), Theater im Bauturm Cologne. 2013)

Screenplay (feature film)

- Der gelbe Satin (Sarı Saten). Sonfilm. Cologne 2009

Awards

- 2013 Human Rights Award of the Pastor Georg Fritze Commemorative Endowment, Cologne
- 2018 European Tolerance Award for Democracy and Human Rights from the Austrian PEN club and the city of Villach



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Quotes by and about Doğan Akhanlı

“Writing slows down the passage of time. (...) On the one hand I try to write as a man of letters, on the other hand I’m not a machine, so every sentence, every association, every word takes me as a person back into the past, I have to think about it a lot, edit it, re-evaluate it, reflect, etc. So you may write one sentence, but think a million sentences and these million sentences are a therapy for me, and the literature is a single sentence.” *Doğan Akhanlı, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, 10.8.2018*

“I write in Turkish, but I live in Germany. This is a difficult situation because I am not part of German literature; I am part of Turkish literature.” *Doğan Akhanlı, DIE WELT, 19.8.2019*

“He seems to be an incorrigible optimist, he believes in the power of dialogue and empathy. At the same time he also reminds the reader that democracy and freedom don’t come naturally, but that one must work for them. Above all, he is a great storyteller, cleverly combining his reflections on culture and history with his own experiences.” *Süddeutsche Zeitung, 17.2.2018*

SHIRIN NESHAT

Photographic works

- Women of Allah series (1993–1997)
- The Book of Kings (2012)
- The Home of My Eyes (2015)
- Trilogy: Illusions and Mirrors (2013), Roja (2016), and Sarah (2016)

Film and video art

- Anchorage (1996)
- Film trilogy Turbulent (1998), Rapture (1999) and Fervor (2000) Passage (2001)
- Logic of the Birds (2002)
- The Last Word (2003)
- Mahdokht (2004)
- Zarin (2005)

Feature films

- Women Without Men (2009)
- Looking for Oum Kulthum (2017)

Solo exhibitions, selection

Museo Correr, Venice, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., Arab Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Doha, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit, Michigan, Stedelijk

Museum, Amsterdam, Serpentine Gallery, London, Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal

Group exhibitions, selection

48th Berlinale, Venice (1999), Whitney Biennial, New York (2000), Documenta XI, Kassel (2002), LACMA, Los Angeles (2015)

Awards

The Golden Lion at the 48th Berlinale Venice 1999, Hiroshima Freedom Prize (2005), Silver Lion at the 66th Venice Film Festival 2009, Crystal Award, Davos (2014), Praemium Imperiale, Tokyo (2017)

Quotes by Shirin Neshat

“My work arose from my fascination with the female body and the fact that it was such a problem in Islamic society. The woman’s body became the war zone of male ideologies; just consider the compulsory headscarf. I was interested in the resistance of women during the Islamic Revolution (...).” *Shirin Neshat, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 7.6.18*

“When I’m awake, I dream that the people of Iran will succeed in overcoming the ruling system. Above all, I put my hope in the courage, the passion and resilience of Iranian women. For some time, they have been challenging the government, tying their headscarves on sticks, dancing in public, playing football in backyards. In the long run, they won’t be controllable. These women are no longer intimidated. I’m certain that if anyone succeeds in changing structures in Iran, then women.” *Shirin Neshat, Die Zeit, 10.6.2018*

“Good art is not tendentious. My work also has no documentary character. Realism isn’t my thing. As an artist, I’m drawn to metaphors and stylisation that transcend the here and now. This way I express what is in the air without simply depicting reality. (...) The West misunderstands the role of women in my work. I never represent the women as victims. Never. They are always protesting and challenging authorities and the world of men. My women are the winners. Of course, I know that in reality women are much more under pressure from Arab society and religion than men. But Arab women submit to nothing and no one. They fight. And unlike the women here in the West, they don’t want to be like men. They want the same rights, but insist on their sensuality, on their womanhood. That’s a whole new kind of feminism.” *Shirin Neshat Der Tagesspiegel, 7.2.2013*

ENKHBAT ROOZON

1978-83: Studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig, graduated as best of year in photography

1986-96: Worked for Mon Tsame, then the largest photography agency in Mongolia, in the end as the head of the agency

1996: Founding of Admon printing house

1998: Founding of Fotomon image agency



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2000: Founding of Monsudar publishing house

2005: Founding of Internom bookshop chain

2009: Founding of the NGO Davalgaa (wave of education)

Since 2011: Organises the Days of Enlightenment every year in autumn

2017: Appointed to the Educational Council of the Mongolian Presidential Office

Quotes by Enkhbat Roozon

“My concern is the promotion of autonomy and responsibility in every single citizen. We need to empower people to think critically and distinguish between ‘truth and fiction’ in the social debate. At the same time we need more social debate because without debate, there’s no democracy and no progress.” *Enkhbat Roozon*

“In our view, social development is inextricably linked to the development of the mother tongue. This view has always been at the root of our publishing work. As a publisher, we are trying to find ways to explain the basic concepts of the new social order. We are confronted daily with the challenges that accompany it through our translation work. This work can only be done by people who have foreign language skills and a good education. Unfortunately, the state demonstrates no initiative in tackling this task. Therefore we see it as our duty to dedicate ourselves to this task, according to our own means and abilities. By doing so, we contribute to progress and social development.” *Enkhbat Roozon, goethe.de*

“A government that has no interest in making the constitution comprehensible for all citizens has no interest in democracy.” *Enkhbat Roozon, goethe.de*



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About the 2019 laudatory speakers

This year, the laudatory speeches for the awardees of the Goethe-Medal will be held by Insa Wilke (for Doğan Akhanlı), Britta Schmitz (for Shirin Neshat) and by Damian Miller (for Enkhbat Roozon).

INSA WILKE

Insa Wilke was born in Bremerhaven. She studied German and history in Göttingen, Rome and Berlin, graduating with a doctorate (2009). In 2010, her book *Ist das ein Leben. Der Dichter Thomas Brasch* was published. As a literary critic, she appears in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and on the radio. She is a member of various juries including the Litprom best books Weltempfänger and the SWR best books list as well as the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize (Klagenfurt). Since 2005, Insa Wilke has been designing and presenting cultural events. In 2010, she took over programme management at the Literaturhaus Köln. In 2012, she resigned from this position in favour of freelance work. She has been on the team of “Gutenbergs Welt” (WDR3) since 2013 and the “lesenswert quartett” on SWR television since 2017. In 2016, she became the programme manager of the Mannheim literary festival *lesen.hören*. Insa Wilke was awarded the Alfred Kerr Prize for Literary Criticism in 2014.

BRITTA SCHMITZ

Britta Schmitz lives and works in Berlin as a freelance curator for cultural projects in Germany and abroad. Between 1983 and 2015, she worked at the Nationalgalerie and, as curator, was responsible for the collection of post-1970 art with a focus on global and international art trends. The artists she's worked with include Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, Lucian Freud, Günter Brus, Martin Kippenberger and Shirin Neshat. She has also curated group exhibitions: works from Africa in *Who Knows Tomorrow* and *Face Up* with 14 Australian artists. In addition to the Nationalgalerie, Britta Schmitz has worked for other cultural institutions, such as for the Neue Berliner Kunstverein (nbk) with an exhibition of drawings by Daniel Richter and Eran Schaerf and with *History is a Warm Gun*, an exhibition with 16 artists from Berlin. At the Haus der Festspiele she designed presentations with the Viennese actionists Hermann Nitsch and Günther Brus, at Haus Liebermann *Beyond the Wall* and in Vienna the exhibition *Attersee Feuerstelle* presently showing at Museum Belvedere 21.

DAMIAN MILLER

Damian Miller teaches at the Pädagogische Hochschule Thurgau (PHTG). He worked for several years as a primary teacher in primary and vocational schools, studied psychology, education and civil law at the University of Zurich and earned his doctorate on Herman Nohl's “theory” of pedagogical reference. He then worked in a home for young people with civil and criminal sanctions. Starting in 2000, he specialised in quantitative research methods and e-learning at universities, conducted evaluation research at various universities and became a lecturer for quantitative research methods at the University of Zurich. From 2010, he dealt with the ideological and structural backgrounds of sexual assault at the Odenwaldschule. Damian Miller became head of the Department of Education and Social Sciences at the PHTG and member of the Binational School of Education of the University of Konstanz UKN and PHTG. He holds lectures and seminars in Europe, Mongolia and China, focusing on the education policy and history of Switzerland. Damian Miller is

editor of the essay “On Bullshit” by Harry Gordon Frankfurt, which also appeared in Mongolian, dealing with fake news and “alternative facts.”



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Press photos



You can download press photos of the awardees of the 2019 Goethe Medal – Doğan Akhanlı, Shirin Neshat and Enkhbat Roozon – free of charge at

goethe.de/bilderservice

Please note the copyright information.

Videos of the 2019 Goethe Medal awardees are available at:

www.goethe.de/goethe-medaille

Images and biographies of the president and the board of the Goethe-Institut, Prof. Dr. h.c. Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, Johannes Ebert and Rainer Pollack, are at:

[Goethe-Institut Leitung](#)

About the Goethe Medal

The Goethe Medal was established by the Executive Committee of the Goethe-Institut in 1954 and acknowledged as an official decoration by the Federal Republic of Germany in 1975. The conferment is held on 28 August, Goethe's birthday, in Weimar and organised in close partnership with the Klassik Stiftung Weimar and the City of Weimar. The Goethe-Institut organises a fringe programme together with Kunstfest Weimar. Since it was first awarded in 1955, a total of 351 people from 66 countries have been honoured. The awardees have included Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Bourdieu, David Cornwell AKA John le Carré, Sir Ernst Gombrich, Lars Gustafsson, Ágnes Heller, Petros Markaris, Sir Karl Raimund Popper, Jorge Semprún, Robert Wilson, Neil MacGregor, Helen Wolff, Yurii Andrukhovych and Irina Shcherbakova.

The candidates for the Goethe Medal are nominated every year by the Goethe-Instituts abroad in close collaboration with Germany's diplomatic representation offices. The Goethe Medal Conferment Commission selects awardees, who must then be confirmed by the Board of Trustees. The Commission consists of Dr. Franziska Augstein, journalist, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Prof. Dr. Christina von Braun, cultural scientist, author, filmmaker, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Dr. Meret Forster, editorial director, music, BR-Klassik, Dr. Anselm Franke, curator, division head Fine Arts and Film, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Dr. Ina Hartwig, head of cultural affairs of the City of Frankfurt am Main, literary critic, Prof. Dr. Ursula von Keitz, film scholar, Filmuniversität Babelsberg Konrad Wolf, Ulrich Khuon, director, Deutsches Theater, Eva Menasse, writer, Elisabeth Ruge, author, publisher and literary agent, Moritz Müller-Wirth, journalist, *Die Zeit*; representing the Federal Foreign Office: Andreas Görden, head of the Directorate-General for Culture and Communication at the Federal Foreign Office; representing the Goethe-Institut: Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, president of the Goethe-Institut, Johannes Ebert, secretary-general of the Goethe-Institut.

The Goethe-Institut is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with global reach. With 157 institutes in 98 countries, it promotes knowledge of the German language abroad, fosters international cultural cooperation and conveys a comprehensive image of Germany today. Through partnerships with institutions in many other places, the Goethe-Institut has more than 1,000 points of contact worldwide.

More information about the Goethe Medal and previous awardees:
[https://www.goethe.de/de/uun/ver/gme.html?wt_sc=goethe Medal](https://www.goethe.de/de/uun/ver/gme.html?wt_sc=goethe+Medal)



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