



PRESS KIT 2021 GOETHE MEDAL

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1) PRESS RELEASE

AWARDEES OF THE GOETHE MEDAL WILL BE HONOURED IN AN ONLINE CEREMONY

Munich, 27 August 2021 – **Tomorrow at 11 am, an online ceremony produced in cooperation with Deutsche Welle will honour the awardees of the 2021 Goethe Medal. They cannot come to Germany together due to the current travel restrictions. Only awardee Wen Hui is in Weimar, where Goethe-Institut president Carola Lentz will present her with the Goethe Medal at the Anna Amalia Library after the online ceremony is broadcasted. Carena Schlewitt, theatre scholar and artistic director of the HELLERAU European Centre for the Arts, will hold a laudatory speech for her. Afterwards, Carola Lentz and Rolf C. Hemke, director of the Kunstfest Weimar, will discuss the challenges of increasing digitalisation in international cultural exchange: What is the relationship between the potential global reach and the local anchoring of cultural work? And what unique problems do cultural actors have to overcome in countries where digital communication is characterised by censorship and surveillance?**

Carola Lentz opens the 2021 Goethe Medal online ceremony by quoting an appeal made by 2017 Goethe Medal awardee Urvashi Butalia from India, saying, “Never before has freedom of expression carried as much weight as today. We need transparency and critical faculties, and we need to learn from each other.’ I am very pleased that we are honouring the cultural and civic engagement of Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell, Toshio Hosokawa and Wen Hui today with the Goethe Medal.” The Goethe-Institut confers the official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany to honour individuals who have performed outstanding service for international cultural dialogue.

“Culture is a very special juice – in the network of the global community” is the theme of this year’s award ceremony. Goethe-Institut vice president **Christina von Braun** explains, “Artists are among the most important actors in the digital communicative apparatus that connects us, but can also turn us against each other. They teach us to see and read with different eyes, to hear with different ears; in other words, they are mediators of the differentiation that we need in the networked world.” Following on from this, the Minister of State for International Cultural Policy at the Federal Foreign Office **Michelle Müntefering** expresses that, “People are building too many walls and too few bridges. Today we see more clearly than ever that those who wall themselves up impede the future. We can, however, only solve the great tasks of our era together. And that is why the work of people like you, Marilyn Douala Manga Bell, Toshio Hosokawa and Wen Hui, is so important. With your work, you set out again and again on the path to the opening of society.”

The social economist and president of the dual’art cultural organisation **Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell** from Cameroon is being honoured for her forward-looking ideas for reappraising

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colonial injustice, her civil society commitment and international cultural work. In her own words, “Our society is divided. That is why we are working on the culture of memory, on our cultural heritage, on the things that make up our identity. I am fighting to make sense of these chaotic times for society. And I think I’m doing it much the way my ancestors did. They were visionaries and I think like them, working today for tomorrow.” Laudatory speaker **Mahret Ifeoma Kupka**, art scholar and curator for fashion, body and performance at the Museum Angewandte Kunst Frankfurt a.M. underscores that “The awarding of the Goethe Medal is not only a tribute to outstanding work, but also a reminder to German decision-makers that coming to terms with the colonial past must go far beyond the payment of so-called development aid and ensure that the return of selected objects designated as stolen art is not just an empty gesture. [We need] new historiographies and the rediscovery of lost forms of storytelling. [We need] spaces for the development of new forms of living and working together. Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell, through her work, is making a very important contribution to the formation of truly global communities.”

Toshio Hosokawa from Japan, one of the best-known composers of contemporary music, is honoured for his distinctive musical language, which he creates from the tension between Western and traditional Japanese culture. On being awarded the Goethe Medal, he noted, “I was actually a stranger in Germany, but the Germans always encouraged me, a foreigner, to go my own way. I am very grateful for that, and I believe that Germany has shaped me as a composer. During my studies there, I rediscovered myself and realised that my musical roots are in Japan. We in the East have to study Western music, not just copy it superficially, but learn to understand it properly so that we can understand our own music better. We from the East and West have to therefore treat each other with respect. That way we can create something new.” In his laudatory speech, chief conductor and artistic director of the Orquestra de València **Alexander Liebreich** emphasises, “I believe that our times in particular need composers like Toshio Hosokawa. In today’s deluge, Toshio Hosokawa’s poetic burning glass of time and space forces us to take on the sensibility of Zen Buddhist contemplation. [He] is a master in the use of Western instruments, but does so to express his own Far Eastern culture. The result is far more than a bridge between East and West, but rather his knowledge that the true nature of the world knows no division into East and West.”

Wen Hui, choreographer and co-founder of the Living Dance Studio, is part of the avant-garde of dance theatre in China at the interface of art, theatre, dance and documentary film and is honoured for her impressive search for traces beyond official narratives in her pieces. Wen Hui notes, “For me, the body is the central arena. Through it, through the body memory, we remember and reflect history and society, our reality, everything we have experienced. ... Receiving the Goethe Medal at the age of 60 was a great surprise for me. Such an affirmation inspires me to look at this moment as a new beginning in life and I think every day about what we should do after the epidemic. In these torn times, I want to pay tribute to the courageous people who speak the truth in whatever way they can!” In her laudatory speech for Wen Hui, **Carena Schlewitt** explains, “‘Everyone’s body has a stamp,’ is the principle of her choreographic and physical work. This ‘body stamp’ is always a result of historical, social situations, of everyday and working worlds. Few contemporary choreographers have created such a concise historical and at the same time contemporary body



archive as Wen Hui. [She] builds a bridge between the generations, between a taboo past and the present, between the dance styles of revolutionary ballet and contemporary dance. [She is] very often devoted to the female body. She gently demands that we take a close look at and appreciate the role of women in society.”

The online ceremony will be broadcast on the Goethe-Institut’s website at www.goethe.de/goethe-medaille with subtitles in English, French, Japanese and Chinese. It will also be shown by Deutsche Welle on [YouTube/DWDeutsch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWDeutsch) and on television on DW Deutsch on 28 Aug at 1.30 pm and 6.30 pm, on DW Deutsch+ on 28 Aug at 12.30 pm and 6.30 pm.

For reporting purposes, the Goethe Medal online ceremony is available for you today at this link: <https://vimeo.com/589233470> (password = 4wdgh)

For the Goethe Medal, the Goethe-Institut and Kunstfest Weimar are organising a special programme that can also be watched online at www.goethe.de/goethe-medaille: Today, 27 August 2021, at 5 pm, the Musikfabrik ensemble from Cologne will play compositions by Toshio Hosokawa entitled “Stunden-Blumen – Vertical Time Study” at the Schießhaus Weimar. More information on that can be found [here](#). And at 7 pm, Wen Hui will premiere her new documentary dance project “I am 60” at the E-Werk Weimar (repeat performance on Saturday, 28 August, 4 pm). More information on that can be found [here](#). On 28 August at 12 noon, Goethe-Institut president Carola Lentz and director of the Kunstfest Weimar Rolf C. Hemke will discuss the consequences of increasing digitalisation of cultural work and the relationship between the local anchoring and the potential global reach of international cultural dialogue.

**Press kit on the 2021 Goethe Medal: www.goethe.de/pressemappe
Press photos of the 2021 awardees: www.goethe.de/bilderservice.**

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. Since it was first awarded in 1955, 357 persons from 70 countries have been honoured, including Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Bourdieu, David Cornwell AKA John le Carré, Sir Ernst Gombrich, Lars Gustafsson, Ágnes Heller, Petros Markaris, Shirin Neshat, Sir Karl Raimund Popper, Jorge Semprún, Robert Wilson, Neil MacGregor, Helen Wolff, Yurii Andrukhovych, Irina Shcherbakova and Ian McEwan.

The Goethe Medal Commission

Dr. Franziska Augstein (journalist, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*), Prof. Dr. Christina von Braun (chair and representative of the board of trustees, cultural scientist, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Dr. Meret Forster (editorial director, music, BR-Klassik), Olga Grjasnowa (writer), Matthias Lilienthal (dramaturge and theatre director), Moritz Müller-Wirth (journalist, *Die Zeit*), Cristina Nord (Berlinale Forum, head of Berlin section), Insa Wilke (literary critic); representing the Federal Foreign Office:

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Dr. Andreas Grger (head of the department of culture and communication at the Foreign Office);
representing the Goethe-Institut: Prof. Dr. Carola Lentz (president of the Goethe-Institut), Johannes
Ebert (secretary-general of the Goethe-Institut)

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2) PRESS RELEASE

2021 GOETHE MEDAL: PRINCESS MARILYN DOUALA MANGA BELL, TOSHIO HOSOKAWA AND WEN HUI WILL BE HONOURED IN ONLINE CEREMONY

Munich, 1 July 2021 – **The awardees of the 2021 Goethe Medal – Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell from Cameroon, Toshio Hosokawa from Japan and Wen Hui from China – will be honoured in an online ceremony on 28 August at 11 am. The ceremony, produced in cooperation with Deutsche Welle, will be broadcast in a live stream on the Goethe-Institut’s channels. Kunstfest Weimar also offers a special supporting programme: A conversation between the president of the Goethe-Institut Carola Lentz and the director of the Kunstfest Rolf C. Hemke about international cultural exchange in multilateral contexts at noon on 28 August. The Ensemble Musikfabrik will perform compositions by Toshio Hosokawa on 27 August, 5 pm, and on the same day at 7 pm, the world premiere of the dance piece “I am 60” by Wen Hui is planned.**

The 2021 Goethe Medal goes to the social economist and president of the doual’art cultural organisation Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell of Cameroon, who develops forward-looking ideas for reappraising colonial injustice and combines civil society commitment with international cultural work. Awardee Toshio Hosokawa is one of the best-known composers of contemporary music who creates his distinctive musical language from the tension between Western and traditional Japanese culture. Choreographer and performer Wen Hui is part of the avant-garde of dance theatre in China. At the interface of art, theatre, dance and documentary film, her pieces are often a personal search for traces beyond official narratives. All the awardees, in the words of Goethe-Institut president Carola Lentz, courageously stand up with their art for a just, open and democratic society. They are important role models for international cultural exchange, which is challenged by increasing illiberal tendencies, growing inequalities and the global impact of the pandemic.

The awardees of the 2021 Goethe Medal and their latest projects will be presented in a Zoom press conference on 13 July from 10-11 am. Please register with smeierhenrich@t-online.de

Ceremony planned online and as a live screening in Weimar

Since the pandemic restrictions prevent the awardees from coming to Germany together, an online ceremony of about 30 minutes is planned to be broadcast on 28 August at 11 am on the channels of the Goethe-Institut. It will present the awardees in three film portraits made in collaboration with Deutsche Welle and take viewers on a short journey to Africa, Japan and China. Statements by the laudatory speakers pay tribute to the work of the awardees. The art scholar and curator for fashion, body and performance at the Museum Angewandte Kunst Frankfurt a.M. **Mahret Kupka**

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will speak on **Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell**. Chief conductor and artistic director of the Orquestra de València **Alexander Liebreich** will pay tribute to **Toshio Hosokawa**. The theatre scholar and artistic director of the European Centre for the Arts Hellerau **Carena Schlewitt** will hold the laudatory speech for **Wen Hui**. The theme of this year's award ceremony is "Culture is a special juice – in the network of the global community" alluding to the importance of the unifying power of art and culture in this time of the coronavirus pandemic. **Christina von Braun**, vice-president of the Goethe-Institut and chair of the Goethe Medal Commission, will present this year's motto in the online ceremony.

The Weimar audience can watch the online ceremony on 28 August at 11 am in the study centre of the Anna Amalia Library. Afterwards, the president of the Goethe-Institut **Carola Lentz** and the director of Kunstfest Weimar **Rolf C. Hemke** will discuss current challenges for international cultural exchange. The conversation will be recorded.

Supporting programme for the Goethe Medal at Kunstfest Weimar

On 27 August, the Goethe-Institut and Kunstfest Weimar will present the awardees Wen Hui and Toshio Hosokawa in two works: At 7 pm, **Wen Hui** will perform her new documentary dance project **"I am 60"** for the first time at E-Werk Weimar (repeated on 28 Aug, 4 pm). The Ensemble Musikfabrik from Cologne will perform compositions by **Toshio Hosokawa** under the title **"Stunden-Blumen – Vertical Time Study"** at 5 pm in the Schießhaus Weimar. The performances will be recorded.

The body and its age are the theme of Wen Hui's new work "I am 60". Considering her upcoming 60th birthday, she reflects in it "how our body becomes our own battlefield over time." To this end, in addition to questioning her own family history, she conducted a series of interviews with young women about their struggle for self-assertion in contemporary Chinese society. She also looks at the roots of feminism in the Chinese cinema of the 1930s and asks: What remained of the "new woman" of the Chinese pioneers of feminism proclaimed at the time? In Weimar, Wen Hui is showing a multimedia and documentary project that places her body in the context of film and sound clips, with text projections, recitations and in dialogue with the audience.

Toshio Hosokawa draws his distinctive musical language from the tension between the "Western" avant-garde and traditional Japanese culture. Deeply connected to the aesthetic and spiritual roots of Japanese arts such as calligraphy and court music, the gagaku, in his compositions he gives musical expression to the idea of beauty growing out of transience. "We hear the individual notes and appreciate at the same time the process of how the notes are born and die: a sound landscape of continual 'becoming' that is animated in itself," says Hosokawa. Four musicians from the Ensemble Musikfabrik will perform Hosokawa's reference works in Weimar.

Please send press registrations for the screening of the online ceremony in Weimar, the subsequent discussion by Carola Lentz and Rolf C. Hemke and for the programme at Kunstfest Weimar via e-mail to sarah.adamus@nationaltheater-weimar.de

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Press photos of the 2021 awardees at www.goethe.de/bilderservice

Press kit on the 2021 Goethe Medal at www.goethe.de/pressemappe

The online ceremony for the awarding of the 2021 Goethe Medal will be held in cooperation with Deutsche Welle. The supporting programme for the Goethe Medal in Weimar was developed in cooperation with Kunstfest Weimar. With kind support from the Klassik Stiftung Weimar.

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2) PRESS RELEASE

2021 GOETHE MEDALS HONOUR PRINCESS MARILYN DOUALA MANGA BELL, TOSHIO HOSOKAWA AND WEN HUI

Munich, 19 May 2021 - **The 2021 Goethe Medals go to the social economist and president of the cultural organisation doual'art Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell of Cameroon, to the composer Toshio Hosokawa of Japan and to the dancer and choreographer Wen Hui of China. The Goethe-Institut confers the official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany to honour individuals who have performed outstanding service for international cultural dialogue. The ceremony celebrating the awardees of the 2021 Goethe Medal will take place as a digital live stream on 28 August, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's birthday.**

Carola Lentz, president of the Goethe-Institut, noted, "In pandemic times, international cultural exchange faces particular challenges. Digital communication offers new opportunities, yet at the same time existing inequalities are growing, for example with regard to access to cultural activities and education or gender equality. The legacy of colonial power relations and restrictions on freedom in illiberal post-colonial regimes are becoming even more palpable. This year's awardees don't shy away from these challenges. With their cultural and civil society commitment in three very different countries, they courageously lead the way and stand up with their art for an open, democratic and equal society – also across national borders."

The theme of this year's awarding is "Culture is a very special juice – in the network of the global community." **Christina von Braun**, vice president of the Goethe-Institut and chair of the Goethe Medal Conferment Commission, says, "For Goethe, blood and ink were indistinguishable substances. The flow of these two 'juices' makes life and community possible. This year's awardees of the Goethe Medal are outstanding representatives of this imagery. Their art connects cultures, home and abroad. It bridges genders, and links past and future."

Due to pandemic restrictions, the 2021 Goethe Medal awardees will not be able to travel to Germany together. Therefore, the awarding will be broadcast live as a digital ceremony on 28 August from 11 am on the Goethe-Institut channels. The programme will include three film portraits created in collaboration with Deutsche Welle to honour the work of this year's awardees. In addition, the digital ceremony will be shown at the Kunstfest Weimar and supplemented by a supporting programme. In order to enable personal contacts with the awardees, the Goethe-Institut is offering digital press talks, the dates of which will be announced.

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Statements on the conferrals

Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell is strongly committed to the reappraisal of German colonial history in Cameroon and to a constructive dialogue about the effects of colonialism up to the present day. She sees the particular potential of the visual arts to initiate social change and strengthen the freedom of expression, and thus advocates a broad encouragement of artistic activity. This is also the aim of the contemporary cultural centre doual'art in Cameroon's port city of Douala, which she co-founded. The jury wrote, "Marilyn Douala Manga Bell combines civil society commitment with international cultural work in an outstanding way and takes a reconciliatory and forward-looking position on social conflicts and historic problems. She develops highly regarded ideas for coming to terms with colonial injustice as well as for consolidating Cameroon's own identity."

Toshio Hosokawa is one of the best-known living composers from Japan and an outstanding representative of German-Japanese cultural relations. His oeuvre includes operas, orchestral and solo works, chamber and film music as well as works for traditional Japanese instruments. His musical language takes up the Zen Buddhist symbolic interpretation of nature as well as the tension between Western avant-garde and traditional Japanese culture. For example, his opera *Erdbeben. Träume* (Earthquake. Dreams), which premiered in Stuttgart in 2018, was based on a libretto by the writer Marcel Beyer and on Heinrich von Kleist's *The Earthquake in Chile*. "With his compositions, Hosokawa opens up spaces and connects people all over the world. The unique sound of his music transcends and turns the concert hall into a place of global encounter," wrote the jury. "In doing so, he succeeds in combining culturally specific ways of listening to music into an extraordinary work of sound art, while preserving his own traditions."

Wen Hui belongs to the avant-garde of dance theatre in China and is co-founder of the Living Dance Studio, the country's first independent dance theatre company. In her choreographies, she incorporates elements of documentary film and themes from everyday life in China. She is particularly interested in the traces that history leaves on human bodies, turning them into "reflective archives." In her works *Report on Giving Birth* and *Red*, personal body memory was used as an archive that spans time and bears witness to history. The origins of her works are mostly local, the forms of dance are inspired by ideas from all over the world. "Wen Hui stands for the independent and highly creative independent art scene in China, embodying cultural diversity and the broad spectrum of everyday stories beyond official narratives," wrote the jury. "She tells 'her' stories of China through her sensitive, closely observed dance theatre pieces, which congenially combine different media, documentary elements and poetic power."

About the awardees

Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell was born in Cameroon in 1957. One of the aims of her work is to honour the historical role of her great-grandfather Rudolf Manga Bell (1873-1914), the leader of an important resistance movement against the German colonial power. In doing so, she aims at



contributing to ongoing debates on the politics of memory in Cameroon and beyond. She studied development economics in Paris and has been working as a development expert since 1994, among others for the World Bank and the European Commission. She is co-founder of the doual'art Contemporary Art Center in Douala, which opened in 1991, and is committed to the future of African museums and the restitution of cultural artefacts from colonial contexts. In 2016, she took part, as African expert, in the conference held by the Goethe-Institut Johannesburg on the conception of the Humboldt Forum. In 2019, she co-curated the project *Burden of Memory* at the Goethe-Institut Yaoundé, which brought together artistic explorations of German colonial rule in Africa from various African countries. Her most recent initiatives include the exhibition project *Kamerunstaat*, which tours schools in Cameroon with an accompanying educational programme. She also curated the exhibition *Hey Hamburg! Do you know Douala Manga Bell?* (running until 31 December 2022) at the Hamburg Museum am Rothenbaum, which opened in April. Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell lives in Douala, Cameroon.

Toshio Hosokawa, who was born in Hiroshima in 1955, came to Germany in 1976, where he studied composition with Isang Yun and Klaus Huber. His reputation in the international contemporary music scene grew rapidly and he received numerous commissions. He achieved resounding success in 2001 with the premiere of the oratorio *Voiceless Voice in Hiroshima*. A series of large orchestral works followed, including *Circulating Ocean* (Vienna Philharmonic, Salzburg Festival 2005) and *Woven Dreams* (Cleveland Orchestra, Lucerne Festival 2010). In 2013, Toshio Hosokawa was a guest in Salzburg with the world premiere of *Klage* for soprano and orchestra based on a poem by Georg Trakl. He has also been successively composing the series *Voyages* for solo instrument and ensemble. *Voyage X* remarkably combines the Japanese shakuhachi bamboo flute and western instruments. Toshio Hosokawa has been artistic director of the Takefu International Music Festival in Fukui since 2001 and visiting professor at the Tokyo College of Music since 2004. His most recent works include the violin concerto *Genesis*, which was premiered by the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra under Kent Nagano in the Elbphilharmonie in May this year. Toshio Hosokawa has received numerous awards, including first prize in the composition competition for the centenary of the Berlin Philharmonic, the Young Generation Composition Prize in Europe, the Kyoto Music Prize and the Rheingau Music Prize. Toshio Hosokawa lives in Yokohama, Japan.

Wen Hui, born in Yunnan in 1960, is a dancer, choreographer, documentary filmmaker and installation artist from China. Originally trained as a folk dancer, she attended the Choreography Department of the Beijing Dance Academy from 1985 to 1989 and was then a choreographer in the Oriental Song and Dance Ensemble of China (Dongfang gewutuan). In the 1990s, she studied modern dance in the United States and Europe, including at the Folkwang University in Essen and with Pina Bausch's dance company in Wuppertal. In 1994, Wen Hui founded China's first independent dance theatre group, the Living Dance Studio, together with filmmaker Wu Wenguang. Dance theatre is her means of intervening in society. In *Report on Giving Birth* (1999), the body is used as a strategy of resistance to portray the complexity of being a woman in the cultural and everyday context of our time. With *Report on Body* (2004) she and her team won the ZKB Prize of the Zürcher Theater Spektakel. With the support of the Goethe-Institut, the Living Dance Studio produced the piece *Red*



in 2013, a reflection on the model opera as a political cultural symbol and part of the collective consciousness during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Wen Hui has participated in numerous independent Chinese and international festivals. Her works are shown at theatres, museums and art centres. She is presently working on *I am Sixty*, which will premiere in autumn 2021. Wen Hui lives in Beijing.

The digital ceremony for the awarding of the 2021 Goethe Medal will be held in cooperation with Deutsche Welle. The supporting programme for the Goethe Medal in Weimar was developed in cooperation with Kunstfest Weimar. With kind support from the Klassik Stiftung Weimar.

Press photos of the 2021 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**

About the Goethe Medal

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The Goethe Medal Commission

Dr. Franziska Augstein (journalist, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*), Prof. Dr. Christina von Braun (chair and representative of the board of trustees, cultural scientist, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Dr. Meret Forster (editorial director, music, BR-Klassik), Olga Grjasnowa (writer), Matthias Lilienthal (dramaturge and theatre director), Moritz Müller-Wirth (journalist, *Die Zeit*), Cristina Nord (Berlinale Forum, head of Berlin section), Insa Wilke (literary critic); representing the Federal Foreign Office: Dr. Andreas Görgen (head of the department of culture and communication at the Foreign Office); representing the Goethe-Institut: Prof. Dr. Carola Lentz (president of the Goethe-Institut), Johannes Ebert (secretary-general of the Goethe-Institut)



3) ONLINE CEREMONY ON 28 AUGUST AND AWARDING OF THE 2021 GOETHE MEDAL

Online Ceremony

The online ceremony of about 30 minutes will be held in cooperation with Deutsche Welle and broadcast on Saturday, 28 August at 11 am CET on the channels of the Goethe-Institut and at www.goethe.de/goethe-medaille.

In it, the awardees will be presented in short films. Three laudatory speakers will pay tribute to them: The art scholar and curator for fashion, body and performance at the Museum Angewandte Kunst Frankfurt a.M. Mahret Kupka will speak on Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell. Chief conductor and artistic director of the Orquestra de València Alexander Liebreich will pay tribute to Toshio Hosokawa. The theatre scholar and artistic director of the European Centre for the Arts Hellerau Carena Schlewitt will hold the laudatory speech for Wen Hui. The theme of the 2021 awarding is “Culture is a very special juice – in the network of the global community” alluding to the importance of the unifying power of art and culture in this time of the coronavirus pandemic. Christina von Braun, vice-president of the Goethe-Institut and chair of the Goethe Medal Commission, will present this year’s motto in the online ceremony.

The Weimar audience can watch the online ceremony on 28 August at 11 am in the study centre of the Anna Amalia Library. Afterwards, the president of the Goethe-Institut Carola Lentz and the director of Kunstfest Weimar Rolf C. Hemke will discuss current challenges for international cultural exchange. The conversation will be recorded.

Medal presentations

The medal will be presented to awardee Wen Hui in Weimar following the screening of the online ceremony on 28 August at the Anna Amalia Library. The medal will be presented to Toshio Hosokawa on 30 September 2021 at the Goethe-Institut Tokyo. The medal presentation for Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell is scheduled for 21 October at the Goethe-Institut Cameroon.



4) SUPPORTING PROGRAMME AT THE KUNSTFEST WEIMAR

For the awarding of the Goethe Medal, Kunstfest Weimar is organising a supporting programme in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut: A conversation between the president of the Goethe-Institut Carola Lentz and the director of the Kunstfest Rolf C. Hemke about international cultural exchange in multilateral contexts at noon on 28 August. The Ensemble Musikfabrik will perform compositions by Toshio Hosokawa on 27 August, 5 pm, and on the same day at 7 pm, the world premiere of the dance piece “I am 60” by Wen Hui is planned.

**“I am 60”: World premiere of Wen Hui’s documentary dance project,
27 August, 7 pm, E-Werk Weimar, Am Kirschberg 4, 99423 Weimar,
Repeat performance on 28 Aug, 4 pm**

Tickets €17.50, reduced from €8

The body and its age are the theme of Wen Hui’s new work “I am 60”. Considering her upcoming 60th birthday, she reflects in it “how our body becomes our own battlefield over time.” To this end, in addition to questioning her own family history, she conducted a series of interviews with young women about their struggle for self-assertion in contemporary Chinese society. She also looks at the roots of feminism in the Chinese cinema of the 1930s and asks: What remained of the “new woman” of the Chinese pioneers of feminism proclaimed at the time? In Weimar, Wen Hui is showing a multimedia and documentary project that places her body in the context of film and sound clips, with text projections, recitations and in dialogue with the audience.

“Stunden-Blumen – Vertical Time Study”: Ensemble Musikfabrik from Cologne – Dirk Wietheger (cello), Hannah Weireich (violin), Ulrich Löffler (piano), Michele Marelli (clarinet) – plays compositions by Toshio Hosokawa,

27 August, 5 pm, Schießhaus Weimar, Kromsdorfer Str. 17, 99427 Weimar.

Tickets €17.50, reduced from €8

Toshio Hosokawa draws his distinctive musical language from the tension between the “Western” avant-garde and traditional Japanese culture. Deeply connected to the aesthetic and spiritual roots of Japanese arts such as calligraphy and court music, the gagaku, in his compositions he gives musical expression to the idea of beauty growing out of transience. “We hear the individual notes and appreciate at the same time the process of how the notes are born and die: a sound landscape of continual ‘becoming’ that is animated in itself,” says Hosokawa. Four musicians from the Ensemble Musikfabrik will perform Hosokawa’s reference works in Weimar.

The online ceremony for the awarding of the 2021 Goethe Medal will be held in cooperation with Deutsche Welle. The supporting programme for the Goethe Medal in Weimar was developed in cooperation with Kunstfest Weimar. With kind support from the Klassik Stiftung Weimar.



Please send press registrations for the screening of the online ceremony in Weimar, the subsequent discussion and for the programme at Kunstfest Weimar via e-mail to sarah.adamus@nationaltheater-weimar.de

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5) ABOUT THE AWARDEES

Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell was born in Cameroon in 1957. One of the aims of her work is to honour the historical role of her great-grandfather Rudolf Manga Bell (1873-1914), the leader of an important resistance movement against the German colonial power. In doing so, she aims at contributing to ongoing debates on the politics of memory in Cameroon and beyond. She studied development economics in Paris and has been working as a development expert since 1994, among others for the World Bank and the European Commission. She is co-founder of the doual'art Contemporary Art Center in Douala, which opened in 1991, and is committed to the future of African museums and the restitution of cultural artefacts from colonial contexts. In 2016, she took part, as African expert, in the conference held by the Goethe-Institut Johannesburg on the conception of the Humboldt Forum. In 2019, she co-curated the project *Burden of Memory* at the Goethe-Institut Yaoundé, which brought together artistic explorations of German colonial rule in Africa from various African countries. Her most recent initiatives include the exhibition project *Kamerunstaat*, which tours schools in Cameroon with an accompanying educational programme. She also curated the exhibition *Hey Hamburg! Do you know Douala Manga Bell?* (running until 31 December 2022) at the Hamburg Museum am Rothenbaum, which opened in April. Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell lives in Douala, Cameroon.

Quotes from articles about and interviews with Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell:

We are particularly interested in new forms of contemporary art, in a “relational art” that overcomes the boundary between art and culture and thus penetrates more and more into people’s reality and lives. We strive to immerse artists in the urban milieu so that they develop a sensitivity to their surroundings.

So, one of the focal points of our work is projects that inscribe themselves in the public space and in the social environment.

(...)

We support the vanguard of contemporary art, even if it doesn’t sell and even if it costs us a great deal. We do not position ourselves in relation to the art market, which is very weak in Cameroon anyway, and we are not connected to foreign museums or galleries.

But in Douala and in Cameroon we have succeeded in creating an artist community and a network of contemporary art in Central Africa.

We try to organise contacts and exchange programmes for these artists, and invite artists – from the diaspora or not – from abroad.

bpd.de, 15.01.2007

Avec son mari, Didier Schaub, elle a contribué à faire palpiter le cœur artistique de Douala, irriguant le monde de la création contemporaine bien au-delà de la ville et du Cameroun.

(...)



“Pour la bourgeoisie de la ville”, reconnaît MDMB, “ce n’était rien de plus qu’un amas d’ordures, et un Rodin à la place aurait été préférable”. Elle se souvient d’un délégué du gouvernement nouvellement arrivé se demandant “comment démonter ce machin”. Au fil des ans, le “machin” est devenu l’emblème de la ville. Entendre un vendeur de journaux à la criée confesser qu’il fait chaque jour un détour par cette place parce que l’œuvre l’inspire suffit au bonheur de MDMB. Comme d’écouter certains s’émerveiller de ce “qu’avec rien on puisse faire de si grandes choses”.
jeuneafrique.com, 02.07.2017

And if we look at the wider cultural scene, women are the standard-bearers for Cameroonian art and creativity: as curators, art centre directors, film-makers and above all architects. The future of creative work, the future of the continent itself, depend on the feminisation of art.

(...)

Undeniably, African women artists remain shy of the spotlight – they suffer from a context of social conservatism and machismo. For artists in general, there is a genuine lack of resources and money. If we made a big effort in higher art education, I think African artists would establish a greater presence on the international scene. Display space, museums and art markets are cruelly lacking. Why keep so many works of contemporary African art hidden?

iam-africa.com, interview, 2017

Toshio Hosokawa, who was born in Hiroshima in 1955, came to Germany in 1976, where he studied composition with Isang Yun and Klaus Huber. His reputation in the international contemporary music scene grew rapidly and he received numerous commissions. He achieved resounding success in 2001 with the premiere of the oratorio *Voiceless Voice in Hiroshima*. A series of large orchestral works followed, including *Circulating Ocean* (Vienna Philharmonic, Salzburg Festival 2005) and *Woven Dreams* (Cleveland Orchestra, Lucerne Festival 2010). In 2013, Toshio Hosokawa was a guest in Salzburg with the world premiere of *Klage* for soprano and orchestra based on a poem by Georg Trakl. He has also been successively composing the series *Voyages* for solo instrument and ensemble. *Voyage X* remarkably combines the Japanese shakuhachi bamboo flute and western instruments. Toshio Hosokawa has been artistic director of the Takefu International Music Festival in Fukui since 2001 and visiting professor at the Tokyo College of Music since 2004. His most recent works include the violin concerto *Genesis*, which was premiered by the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra under Kent Nagano in the Elbphilharmonie in May this year. Toshio Hosokawa has received numerous awards, including first prize in the composition competition for the centenary of the Berlin Philharmonic, the Young Generation Composition Prize in Europe, the Kyoto Music Prize and the Rheingau Music Prize. Toshio Hosokawa lives in Yokohama, Japan.

Quotes from articles about Toshio Hosokawa:

... the composer who is considered one of the most important figures of Japan’s musical avant-garde.



klassikakzente.de, 11.03.2021

Hosokawa, who studied composition in Berlin and Freiburg, explains an important difference between European and Japanese music by saying that in the Western tradition, a note is only a part of a whole, whereas in Japanese music a note represents a landscape. A sound is always followed by a pause, then another sound and a pause. Hosokawa characterises his own music, saying, "It's like walking slowly through a garden." And Japanese gardens are not symmetrical. Because, he explains, "When I create music, I want to do so on the basis of my own musical and cultural roots and let it blossom inwardly from there."

konzerthaus.at, 14.01.2015

However engaging the Japanese composer is in conversation, he refuses to accept the role of mediator between cultures that his counterpart offers him. According to Hosokawa, Bach and Beethoven are still regarded as the pillars of European music in Japan, and the composers with whom he studied are largely unknown at home. His own works, he makes clear without illusions, are not nearly as appreciated in Japan as they are in Europe.

Frankfurter Rundschau, 02.09.2008

Wen Hui, born in Yunnan in 1960, is a dancer, choreographer, documentary filmmaker and installation artist from China. Originally trained as a folk dancer, she attended the Choreography Department of the Beijing Dance Academy from 1985 to 1989 and was then a choreographer in the Oriental Song and Dance Ensemble of China (Dongfang gewutuan). In the 1990s, she studied modern dance in the United States and Europe, including at the Folkwang University in Essen and with Pina Bausch's dance company in Wuppertal. In 1994, Wen Hui founded China's first independent dance theatre group, the Living Dance Studio, together with filmmaker Wu Wenguang. Dance theatre is her means of intervening in society. In *Report on Giving Birth* (1999), the body is used as a strategy of resistance to portray the complexity of being a woman in the cultural and everyday context of our time. With *Report on Body* (2004) she and her team won the ZKB Prize of the Zürcher Theater Spektakel. With the support of the Goethe-Institut, the Living Dance Studio produced the piece *Red* in 2013, a reflection on the model opera as a political cultural symbol and part of the collective consciousness during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Wen Hui has participated in numerous independent Chinese and international festivals. Her works are shown at theatres, museums and art centres. She is presently working on *I am Sixty*, which will premiere in autumn 2021. Wen Hui lives in Beijing.

Quotes from articles about Wen Hui:

"Our memories are experiences of the body," writes the Chinese choreographer, dancer, documentary filmmaker Wen Hui. Since she founded the Living Dance Studio with filmmaker Wu



Wenguang in Beijing in 1994, the two have been staging projects that explore China's history through very personal interviews and the means of film, dance and theatre.

Frankfurter Rundschau, 31.08.2015

Wen Hui evokes the step before: the preoccupation with her own role in historical culture. And the Living Dance Studio does not really aspire to be a professional theatre; its programme (also this evening) instead relies on the power of the authentic document. Poetry is less important – the reality of remembering is powerful enough for Wen Hui. This Chinese modernist movement is very close to the “citizens’ stages” currently flourishing in German theatres.

Deutschlandfunk Kultur, 28.06.2021

Her poetic way of linking movement and film, live action and documentary material, individual voices and bodies has a stylistically distinctive language. Wen Hui tends to hold back on stage with unambiguous answers. Truths are conveyed in her choreographies more in sensual experience, in implied images.

Using the example of the precursor project “Memory” on the Cultural Revolution, she describes her approach: “I began to evoke memory in my body. I believe that everyone’s body is an archive and therefore also ideologically formed. As soon as you use your body to touch history, past and present are reflected in it in equal measure.”

Die Welt, 16.11.2014

Wen Hui is one of the great modern dance choreographers in China.

(...)

In place of choreographed dance movements, Wen Hui is fond of improvisation based on the movements of people’s daily life, and she is highly interested in the movements that result from juxtaposing trained and untrained dancers.

maidadance.com



6) ABOUT THE LAUDATORY SPEAKERS

This year, the laudatory speeches for the awardees of the Goethe Medal will be held by Dr Mahret Ifeoma Kupka (Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell), art scholar and curator for fashion, body and performance at the Museum Angewandte Kunst Frankfurt a.M., by Carena Schlewitt (Wen Hui), theatre scholar and artistic director of the European Centre for the Arts in Hellerau and by Alexander Liebreich (Toshio Hosokawa), the chief conductor and artistic director of the Orquestra de València.

Dr Mahret Ifeoma Kupka is an art scholar, freelance writer and, since 2013, curator of fashion, body and performance at the Museum Angewandte Kunst in Frankfurt a.M. In her exhibitions, lectures, articles and interdisciplinary projects, she addresses the issues of racism, remembrance culture, representation and the decolonisation of art and cultural practice in Europe and Africa. She is a member of the advisory board of the Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD) e.V. and a founding member of the Neue Deutsche Museumsmacher*innen. She studied economics in Heidelberg as well as art studies/media theory, philosophy and exhibition design at the University of Design in Karlsruhe, where she completed her doctorate in 2015 with a dissertation on “Fashion blogs and the myth of the revolutionisation of fashion.” Together with Isabel Raabe, she curates the event series of the TALKING OBJECTS project, which investigates forms and practices of knowledge from Africa with African partners and tests strategies of mediation and visualisation.

Alexander Liebreich, born in Regensburg in 1968, studied Romance languages and literature and musicology at the University of Regensburg, voice and conducting at the University of Music and Theatre in Munich and at the Mozarteum in Salzburg. He was influenced by Claudio Abbado, who brought him to the Berlin Philharmonic and the Gustav Mahler Youth Orchestra as a guest conductor in 1994/95. This was followed by positions as guest conductor with orchestras such as the Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Orchestre National de Belgique, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Munich Philharmonic, the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, the Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin, the NHK Symphony Orchestra and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. On the initiative of the Goethe-Institut, he was a visiting professor for the DAAD at the University of Music and Dance in Pyongyang, North Korea, from 2003. From 2006 to 2016 he was chief conductor and artistic director of the Munich Chamber Orchestra, from 2011 to 2014 artistic director of the Tongyeong International Music Festival (TIMF) in South Korea, from 2012 to 2019 artistic director and chief conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Polish Radio (NOSPR). He led the international music festival Katowice Kultura Natura from 2015 to 2018, after which he became chief conductor and artistic director of the Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra. Beginning with the 2021/22 season, he has been the designated chief conductor and artistic director of the Orquestra de València. Alexander Liebreich was honoured for his recordings with the International Classical Music Award (ICMA) and in 2018 with the OPUS Klassik.

Carena Schlewitt, born in Leipzig in 1961, is a dramaturge, curator and theatre director. She studied theatre at the Humboldt University in Berlin, worked at the Academy of Arts in East Berlin and



subsequently worked at international production houses and festivals as a dramaturge, curator and artistic director in Berlin, Düsseldorf and Basel, including as theatre curator and deputy artistic director at the Theater Hebbel am Ufer in Berlin until 2008. There, she curated several international festivals, including the festival Detour via China in 2007. In 2008 she went to the Kaserne Basel, a cultural centre for the independent theatre, dance and performance scene, as director for ten years; from 2012 to 2018 she also directed the international theatre festival in Basel. Since the 2018/2019 season, she has been the artistic director of HELLERAU - European Centre for the Arts in Dresden. In addition to observing and developing the independent theatre scene in Germany and Switzerland, her main areas of focus include theatre's engagement with the transformation processes in East Germany and Eastern Europe, the development of international performance theatre and the relationship between theatre and the public space. In 2006, Carena Schlewitt was honoured with the Polish Cross of Merit in Gold, in 2017 she received the Culture Prize of the City of Basel and in 2019 the Artist Prize of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia.



7) PRESS PHOTOS

Downloadable, free press photos of the awardees of the 2021 Goethe Medal, Princess Marilyn Douala Manga Bell, Toshio Hosokawa and Wen Hui, can be found at www.goethe.de/bilderservice

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Pictures and biographies of the president and the executive committee of the Goethe-Institut, Carola Lentz, Johannes Ebert and Rainer Pollack, can be found at goethe.de/leitung



8) 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. Since it was first awarded in 1955, 357 persons from 70 countries have been honoured, including Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Bourdieu, David Cornwell AKA John le Carré, Sir Ernst Gombrich, Lars Gustafsson, Ágnes Heller, Petros Markaris, Shirin Neshat, Sir Karl Raimund Popper, Jorge Semprún, Robert Wilson, Neil MacGregor, Helen Wolff, Yurii Andrukhovych, Irina Shcherbakova and Ian McEwan.

Proposals for nominations are made by the Goethe-Instituts in consultation with the German missions abroad. The Goethe Medal Commission makes a selection, which must then be confirmed by the Goethe-Institut's executive board. The members of the commission are Dr. Franziska Augstein (journalist, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*), Prof. Dr. Christina von Braun (chair and representative of the board of trustees, cultural scientist, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Dr. Meret Forster (editorial director, music, BR-Klassik), Olga Grjasnowa (writer), Matthias Lilienthal (dramaturge and theatre director), Moritz Müller-Wirth (journalist, *Die Zeit*), Cristina Nord (Berlinale Forum, head of Berlin section), Insa Wilke (literary critic); representing the Federal Foreign Office: Dr. Andreas Görden (head of the department of culture and communication at the Foreign Office); representing the Goethe-Institut: Prof. Dr. Carola Lentz (president of the Goethe-Institut), Johannes Ebert (secretary-general of the Goethe-Institut)