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EUROPEAN ANGST
**A CONFERENCE ON POPULISM, EXTREMISM AND EUROSCEPTICISM
IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN SOCIETIES**

6 – 7 DECEMBER, 2016 / BOZAR, CENTRE FOR FINE ARTS, BRUSSELS

Populism, extremism and euroscepticism are haunting Europe, creating a tense atmosphere in which fear, hate, anger and anxiety generate a climate of European Angst. The current rise of radical parties such as AFD in Germany, UKIP in Great Britain and FN in France indicates a drastic change in European societies and politics – and the more momentum these populist parties and movements gain, the more clueless the established political, cultural and legislative institutions seem to be. A recent expression of this phenomenon is the surprising outcome of the referendum in Great Britain in which a majority, incited by populist leaders, voted to leave the European Union without necessarily grasping the consequences of this act. Another expression is the prevalence of hate speech and violent acts threatening migrants and refugees, a phenomenon in France, Hungary, Germany and Great Britain. In Eastern European societies, a hostile attitude towards liberal values and towards modern, open societies is gaining ground. Hungarian leader Victor Orbán for instance has more than once stated his wish for “an illiberal new state based on national foundations”.

Why is this happening now? And how are we dealing with it? The conference European Angst will shed light on these questions in a unique way. It will leave the comfort zone of liberal consensus by inviting controversial thinkers, thus creating a space for passionate debate, for reflection and in-depth analysis. Among the participants are the writers and philosophers Slavoj Žižek, Didier Eribon and Nobel Prize winner Herta Müller, as well as 40 students selected in an open call. Representing tomorrow’s decision makers, the students will play an active role in the conference, and they will draft a manifesto on Europe’s future to be handed over to EU officials.

DAY 1
TUESDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2016
BOZAR

15:30 – 16:00 Registration and security check

16:00 – 17:30 WELCOME ADDRESS & SPEECHES

Paul Dujardin, Director, Bozar

Conference moderator: Sascha Lehnartz, journalist, head of foreign desk at *Die Welt / Die Welt am Sonntag*, Germany

Opening speech: Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, President, Goethe-Institut, Germany

Keynote speech: Herta Müller, Nobel Prize winner in Literature, Germany

**17:30 – 19:00 1ST CONVERSATION
HOW DID IT COME UPON US? AN ANALYSIS OF EXTREMISM'S,
REASONS AND MANIFESTATIONS.**

Didier Eribon, sociologist, philosopher and author, France
Vladimíra Dvořáková, political scientist, Czech Republic
Shermin Langhoff, artistic director of Berlin's Maxim Gorki Theater, Germany

Moderator: Béatrice Delvaux, journalist, commentator in chief at *Le soir*, Belgium

19:00 – 20:30 Drinks

DAY 2
WEDNESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2016
BOZAR

08:30 – 09:00 Registration

09:00 – 09:20 WELCOME WORDS

Johannes Ebert, Secretary General, Goethe-Institut
Michael Metz Mørch, President of EUNIC Global

09:20 – 09:30 Sascha Lehnartz introducing the programme and the speakers

**09:30 – 11:00 2ND CONVERSATION
SCAPEGOATING: WHY RACISM COULD GAIN SO MUCH
GROUND AND HOW IT FEELS TO BE A MIGRANT IN
CONTEMPORARY EUROPE.**

Paul Scheffer, author and sociologist, The Netherlands
Firas Alshater aka Zukar, actor, producer and youtuber from Syria, based in Berlin

Moderator: Isolde Charim, journalist and writer, Austria

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

**11:30 – 13:00 3RD CONVERSATION
WORDS, WORDS, WORDS. HOW CONSPIRACY THEORIES,
POLARISED TALK SHOW RHETORICS AND SOCIAL MEDIA
ACTIVITIES DISTORT OUR PERCEPTION OF REALITY –
AND HOW REPUTABLE MEDIA COULD REACT.**

Sonia Seymour Mikich, journalist, editor-in-chief, *WDR TV*, Germany

Lukasz Warzecha, journalist and author, Poland

Moderator: Beppe Severgnini, journalist and author, Italy

13:00 – 14:00 Walking lunch

**14:00 – 15:30 4TH CONVERSATION
FACING THE CHALLENGE: AN APPROACH TOWARDS
PRODUCTIVE METHODS AND NARRATIVES TO FACE
EXTREMISM AND THE DISINTEGRATION OF EUROPE.**

Slavoj Žižek, philosopher and cultural critic, Slovenia
Elif Shafak, writer and columnist, Turkey / Great Britain

Moderator: Martin Ehl, journalist and author, Czech Republic

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee break

16:00 – 17:30 Conference summary by Sascha Lehnartz
Presentation of the manifesto

Q&A with Jo Leinen, Member of the European Parliament and President of the European Movement International

Thank you word – Susanne Höhn, Director, Goethe-Institut Southwest Europe

