



EUROPEAN UNION

Guest of Honour 20
23

25 nov ★ 3 dec

Building
a Union
of Cultures

PROGRAMME GUEST OF HONOUR EUROPEAN UNION

LITERARY DIALOGUES WITH EUROPE (ROOM 1)

Sunday, 26 November

Bridges between cultures: the writer diplomat, the diplomat writer

Participants: Ersi Sotiropoulos (Greece), Frank Westerman (Netherlands), Kai Aareleid (Estonia) and Jorge F. Hernández

Moderator: Nicolás Berlanga (EU)

19:30 to 20:50

Room 6, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

Europe and Latin America share a tradition of links between writing and diplomacy. There is no doubt that literature has an extraordinary way of arousing people's curiosity, bringing them together, and helping them to understand other cultures - something that diplomats do daily. Diplomacy has been a gateway for the embassies of both continents to put hundreds of authors on show, along with their works. In common with journalists, those who do this type of work connect societies and anchor memory in the form of words. Shared thought is a gift, space a vehicle, and freedom a must. Literature and diplomacy give rise to valuable conversations. As diplomats and as writers, what kinds of conversations do we want to start? What kind of interest are we trying to arouse? Which emotions do we want to convey? This inaugural session of Literary Dialogues with Europe brings together Greek writer Ersi Sotiropoulos, Dutch writer and journalist Frank Westerman, Estonian author Kai Aareleid, and Mexican writer and diplomat Jorge F. Hernández, with the diplomat and writer Nicolás Berlanga Martínez (currently Ambassador of the European Union to the Democratic Republic of Congo) as moderator.

Monday, 27 November

Europe in literature: narrating the continent

Participants: José Luis Peixoto (Portugal), Nora Ikstena (Latvia), Svetlana Cârsteian (Romania) and Karmele Jaio (Spain)

Moderator: Jaime Segura (EU)

17:00 to 17:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English and French for Svetlana



Since the dawn of literature thousands of years ago, authors have sought to recount history and reflect reality through words. The evocation of a literary landscape begins with a description of one's local area, as in Juan Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo*: in portraying a village, we can portray the world and the essence of human life. But how do such portrayals take form in contemporary literature, in European countries? Are European history and literature demarcated by borders? Experience colours the way we see things, and reading about Europe should present a kaleidoscope of visions and voices, tradition and modernity, and stories told in all of its languages. The following guests will be with us to explore this theme and reveal a different side of Europe through the eyes of several authors: one of the most acclaimed and widely read contemporary authors in Portugal, José Luis Peixoto, the poet and journalist Svetlana Cârstean, Latvian novelist Nora Ikstena, and Basque author Karmele Jaio. The discussion will be moderated by Jaume Segura, the Ambassador of the European Union to Honduras, who is also an author.

Climate change, writing for action

Participants: Maria Ferenčuhová (Slovakia), Robert Perišić (Croatia) and Ilija Trojanow (Germany)

Moderator: Agustín del Castillo

18:00 to 19:20

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

Living in times of social and economic crisis, as well as pandemics, should not distract us from the even greater crisis looming over humanity: climate change. In literary terms, what impact does climate change have on literature? Can literature have an impact on action against the crisis? Can we transform our environment through words? Through poetry, fiction and essays, the authors taking part in this discussion have tackled this important subject in their literary works. A dialogue between science and literature, knowledge and reason, emotion and action - will we be able to reach an agreement? Slovak poet Maria Ferenčuhová, Robert Perišić from Croatia, and Ilija Trojanow from Germany will meet in a discussion analysing how literature can address this issue. The moderator in this session will be Mexican journalist Agustín del Castillo who specialises in environmental matters.

How to write from the margins

Participants: Zeki Ali (Cyprus), Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin (Ireland), Tatiana Țibuleac (Romania) and Berta Dávila (Spain)


Moderator: TBC

19:30 to 20:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

The author, like the reader, is alone: on the margins of the page. Those who decide to devote themselves to writing need to step out of the world temporarily and distance themselves, before they can take up pen and paper to crystallise, through words, their own inner world and vision of reality. But what happens when the language we write in or the society that we belong to is in the minority? Whether it be a language or region that offers this perspective, it is from the margins of society that voices can spring forth to show us a new point of view, a different way of perceiving, because those who write and live on the fringes give us access to a fuller picture of reality: an image that creates beauty and a sense of identity. The following will be with us to speak about their experiences and their literary works: Turkish-speaking Cypriot poet Zeki Ali, Irish-language writer and musician Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin, Romanian novelist Tatiana Țibuleac, and the young Galician poet Berta Dávila.





Tuesday, 28 November

Book promotion in a digital world. What can writers tell us?

Participants: Jacek Dukaj (Poland), Idoia Iribertegui (Spain) and Frank Westerman (the Netherlands)

Moderator: Claudia Neira Bermúdez

17:00 to 17:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

At a time when technology is pushing us towards new ways of living, new ways of creating, reading, and making literature - and of promoting it - will inevitably emerge as well. What have we gained, or what have we lost? The authors on this panel will share insights into how the internet and new technologies have influenced literature, what impact they have had on language and storytelling, and how technology may change their work and even influence public perception. Writers with different profiles have been chosen to enrich this discussion: a science fiction author with a background in philosophy, Jacek Dukaj from Poland; the Spanish illustrator, author and designer Idoia Iribertegui; and a journalist with a lifetime's experience of writing non-fiction, Frank Westerman from the Netherlands. Claudia Neira Bermúdez, journalist and cultural manager from Latin America, will also be taking part.

Words as an instrument of tolerance and openness

Participants: Lídia Jorge (Portugal), Olja Savičević Ivančević (Croatia), Walid Nabhan (Malta) and Angelo Tijssens (Belgium)

Moderator: Ale Carrillo

18:00 to 19:20

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

Diversity and inclusion are topics that have become increasingly prominent in the creative world over the past decade. Through literature, words have been used to open up spaces, bearing witness to experiences of both exclusion and inclusion. But what exactly do we mean by inclusion? Gender, sexual preference, abilities, ethnicity, language, skin colour, ideologies... all of these are associated with the word 'inclusion'. But it also applies to readers. Ensuring that literature is a cultural experience open to everyone is a challenge and a responsibility: anyone should be able to go into a bookshop and not feel like an outsider. Is literature a good ally in efforts to promote diversity and inclusion? Why do we need diversity in the literary world? There is no doubt that literature has always been a potential means of rapprochement, with many authors deciding to examine our surroundings, revisiting preconceived ideas, benchmarks and existing prejudices... The panel discussing these issues will comprise the winner of the FIL Literature Award in Romance Languages, Lídia Jorge (Portugal), Croatian author Olja Savičević Ivančević, Maltese writer Walid Nabhan and the Belgian filmmaker, writer and playwright Angelo Tijssens.

Caravans, diaspora and migration

Participants: Kristian Novak (Croatia), María Dueñas (Spain), Cristina Sandu (Finland) and Kallia Papadaki (Greece)


Moderator: Mario Martz

19:30 to 20:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English





Migration is a right, and beyond that, it is an intrinsic characteristic of humanity. History is littered with the millions of steps that people have taken to reach one place from another, and with the accumulated stories told and heard along the way. As human beings, we are made up of stories, gathered from here and there. A continual and constant movement, which has attracted particular attention in recent years (or has jarred global consciousness even more strongly) due to the mass migration of men, women and children in many parts of the world. Armed conflicts. Natural disasters. Extreme poverty. The impending climate crisis. These are only a few of the causes. For people to become engaged in something, they must first understand it. Or at least try to understand it. Literature on migration, along with films and photography, is a powerful form of expression that can help educate us about the topic. How is it portrayed in contemporary literature? How are writers affected when they migrate, or if they are children of migrants? The panel discussing this topic will comprise Kristian Novak from Croatia, María Dueñas from Spain, Cristina Sandu from Finland, and Kallia Papadaki from Greece, with the participation of Mario Martz, originally from Nicaragua.

Wednesday, 29 November

Literature without borders

Participants: Nina Yargekov (France), Yara Monteiro (Portugal) and Gian Marco Griffi (Italy)

Moderator: Julián Herbert

17:00 to 17:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: French, English and probably Italian

Borders worldwide are places of constant cultural exchange. This melting pot of two or more societies, contrasting or not, forms a stimulating scene for authors, especially where people on either side of the border have mixed identities, which may also involve frequent switching between languages. This constant exchange enriches the landscape through interconnections, resulting in fertile ground from which words can sprout, enabling new stories to be told. In talking about how to bridge borders with books - namely, reading and writing literature from different perspectives - we will be joined by Nina Yargekov from France, Yara Monteiro from Portugal, and Gian Marco Griffi from Italy, with the Mexican author Julián Herbert moderating the discussion.

Books and letters to promote dialogue

Participants: Pascal Quignard (France), Jurga Vilė (Lithuania), Jean Portante (Luxembourg) and Nikos Bakounakis (Greece)


Moderator: Sylvia Georgina Estrada

18:00 to 19:20

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: French, English and probably Italian

As readers, we engage in a dialogue with the author, even if we are separated by several centuries or speak different languages. The core principle is indisputable: through reading, we strike up conversations with the dead, the living, and ourselves. To write is to share a unique view of the world, making contact with others by means of the artefact we call a book. At a time where everything seems to be a one-sided speech, reading is an invitation to open up a dialogue. Writing, publishing, translating, selling and promoting books are thus ways to foster the exchange of ideas, with reading and writing acting as catalysts for dialogue. This session of the Literary Dialogues with Europe aims to highlight the importance of literature as a valid space within which to talk to each other, discuss ideas, respectfully disagree and, at the same time, gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and





one another. The guests are French author Pascal Quignard, Jurga Vilė from Lithuania, Nikos Bakounakis from Greece, and Jean Portant from Luxembourg, with the Mexican journalist Sylvia Georgina Estrada as moderator.

Journalism and literature: common ground

Participants: Jáchym Topol (Czech Republic), Karolina Ramqvist (Sweden) and Jana Beňová (Slovakia)
Moderator: Carolina López Hidalgo
19:30 to 20:50
Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara
Interpretation: English

Those who dedicate themselves to writing often have a second calling in life, whether it be in their studies or working life. If we browse through the c.v.s of our favourite authors from around the world, we will find that very many writers are also doctors, architects, diplomats, or involved in a wide range of other activities. However, perhaps the most common combination is that of author and journalist. Using words as a tool of the trade in two seemingly disparate worlds, journalism and literature have much in common, though there are a few clear differences. This theme will be explored by Jáchym Topol from the Czech Republic, Swedish author Karolina Ramqvist, and Jana Beňová from Slovakia, with the Mexican journalist Carolina López Hidalgo acting as moderator.

Thursday, 30 November

Contemporary crisis seen by authors


Participants: Witold Szablowski (Poland), Andrei Kurkov (Ukraine) and Eleni Kefala (Cyprus)
Moderator: Carol Zardetto
17:00 to 17:50
Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara
Interpretation: English


We are living in a century rife with conflicts. Social conflicts, climate crisis, war, democratic and anti-democratic struggles, and ideological battles, including those involving language. Ideas and actions come to a head in our daily reality, with literature standing on one side, as one witness among the many recording these events. Narratives of current crises are of the utmost importance, providing contemporary records of how one set of problems follows another, and showing how the societies concerned are affected. Witold Szablowski from Poland, Andrei Kurkov from Ukraine and Eleni Kefala from Cyprus will engage in this conversation with Carol Zardetto from Guatemala.

Stories of exclusion: fighting it with words

Participants: Elena Alexieva (Bulgaria), Stejărel Olaru (Romania), Nathalie Ronvaux (Luxembourg) and Colm Tóibín (Ireland)
Moderator: TBC
18:00 to 19:20
Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara
Interpretation: English and possibly French

Skin colour, sexual preference, gender, ethnicity, different abilities, and religion, and even something as simple as a person's forename and surname, have all been used as grounds for excluding particular individuals from society. In the face of these injustices, the written word has taken on a different role: over the centuries, literature





has testified to exclusion and discrimination, and writers have used narrative and poetic resources to overturn discriminatory obstacles. Using the particular qualities of fiction and poetry, authors have shared stories about how to overcome adverse situations, whether their own or those experienced by others. In this way, the pen becomes not only the sharpest sword, but also an effective tool to share solutions and leave a record of the facts. We will be joined by the Bulgarian author Elena Alexieva, Colm Tóibín from Ireland, the Romanian historian Stejărel Olaru and Nathalie Ronvaux from Luxembourg to discuss the theme of exclusion and how it is represented in their works.

Writing in another language

Participants: María Cecilia Barbeta (Germany), Elena Buixaderas (Czech Republic), Kader Abdolah (Netherlands)

Moderator: Bettina Muscheidt

19:30 to 20:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

Living between two cultures, or switching from one to the other, often presents writers with a pressing decision when they find themselves faced with a blank page: which language should they use? Changing country is a situation common to many writers, but changing language goes a step further; sometimes this may transform their identity, making it clear that the new place and the new language are established and taking root. It is almost like changing skin. This sparks new types of literature, and new ways of seeing the world and recounting its stories through poetry and prose. The result is literature enriched by many traditions, with multiple origins that are subtly expressed, resulting in the unique outcome that can spring only from writing in another language. This panel comprises several authors who have changed their language after changing countries: Elena Buixaderas from the Czech Republic, Kader Abdolah from the Netherlands, Ivna Žic from Austria and María Cecilia Barbeta from Germany.

Friday, 1 December

Translation: building universal literature

Participants: Sylva Fischerová (Czech Republic), Peter Svetina (Slovenia), Elena Alexieva (Bulgaria)


Moderator: Jacqueline Santos


17:00 to 17:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

Umberto Eco wrote, 'The language of Europe is translation' - a phrase that reverberates through the bringing together of cultures. The linguistic diversity of different societies is enriched by literary translation: readers and writers are made aware of other literary traditions through the work performed by translators. But that's not all: it also creates a space for mutual understanding. In this way we gain new experiences, and are able to understand them, by reading about alternative world views, originally expressed in a foreign language, which may sometimes be different or even far-removed from those in our immediate environment. Put differently, translation is the reason why we can read the classics, and is responsible for the existence of what we call 'universal literature'; otherwise, we would only ever read what has been written in our own language. From the author's perspective, translation also means the closest of close reading, as the translator scrutinises every word in a way unlike any other kind of reading.





In this discussion, writers and translators will share with us how they combine these two intrinsically related vocations, and the ways in which translating influences their own original work. Sylva Fischerová (Czech Republic), Elena Alexieva (Bulgaria), Ivna Žic (Austria) and Peter Svetina (Slovenia) will talk about their experiences as literary translators, referring to genres as different as children's literature, prose and poetry.

How to write and read in violent times

Participants: Eva Meijer (Netherlands), Stavros Christodoulou (Cyprus), Neige Sinno (France) and Haska Shyyan (Ukraine)

Moderator: Guadalupe Morfín

18:00 to 19:20

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English and preferably Greek for Stavros

Society is being afflicted by violence as never before, given the ease with which graphic and unfiltered news can spread through social media. In violent times where wars assume many forms, from wars of aggression to the stark violence of crime, writers are not left unmoved in the face of atrocities. But how should they share their responses with readers? Fiction, articles and poetry are ideal means of bearing witness to such violence, providing a historical record that is also a work of art and a call for peace and reason. To discuss the different ways in which they explore conflicts in their work, we will be accompanied by Eva Meijer from the Netherlands, the Cypriot Stavros Christodoulou and Haska Shyyan from Ukraine, with the participation of the Mexican poet Guadalupe Morfín.

The environment that surrounds us: a literary view

Participants: Isabelle Wéry (Belgium), Hannah Arnesen (Sweden) and Pénélope Bagieu (France)


Moderator: Gaia Danese


19:30 to 20:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

Since the times of Homer, it has been clear that descriptions of nature are not simply an ancillary feature of literature. The colour of the sea, and different words to express it, even the wind itself, had a precise meaning in antiquity. What are the modern-day equivalents in contemporary European narratives? The space in which we live and how we represent it is also reflected in the particular way we write about and see the world. This assumes even greater meaning for people living at a time in which the landscape and our physical and spiritual relationship with nature makes it impossible to overlook the climate crisis. How do we write in such a reality? And read? The authors who will be discussing this include the Belgian Isabelle Wéry, Hannah Arnesen from Sweden and Pénélope Bagieu from France. Graphic literature is also used as a medium in contemporary European literature to teach about the environment around us, so two authors who are also illustrators will be taking part in this panel.





Saturday, 2 December

The value of poetry in everyday life

Participants: Sylva Fischerová (Czech Republic), Peter Svetina (Slovenia), and Nikos Chryssos (Greece)

Moderator: Rocío Cerón

17:00 to 17:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

What is poetry for? What can it add to our lives? Though poetry resides in books, it also permeates our everyday lives. There are contemporary poetic traditions that actually highlight this unique value by focusing on apparently insignificant objects and happenings in our daily lives which, when viewed through the prism of poetry, can prove enlightening. How do poets experience this? What purposes can poetry serve beyond that of being read? Appreciation of the language, aesthetic enjoyment, and the learning experience which that supposes... There are many uses of poetry and, just to prove it, we have gathered together three poets with different profiles. To spark discussion, their work is defined by diversity and advances in poetry, from the use of technology to poetry for children. The participants are Sylva Fischerová from the Czech Republic (appointed 'City Poet of Prague'), Peter Svetina from Slovenia and Nikos Chryssos from Greece, with Mexican Rocío Cerón as moderator.

Authors and literature in the face of crises

Participants: Arnon Grunberg (Netherlands), Elena Alexieva (Bulgaria) and András Forgách (Hungary)

Moderator: Brenda Navarro

18:00 to 19:20

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: English

The political and social realms, the climate... It seems that nowhere is immune from crises at the moment. Even so, words continue to be a tool in our search for a solution, or at least a means by which to record the events we are witnessing in our collective memory. Open communication fosters dialogue, and authors have taken on an important role in this regard by choosing current issues as the driving force behind their narratives. How do writers experience conflicts? How does what is happening on the streets, in politics, and in the rest of the world affect their daily lives? At what point and how do they come to take the decision to capture it on paper? Literature leaves a legacy of how these crises are seen and experienced, and how we make it through times of crisis. To gain a deeper understanding of these personal visions within their literature, the European authors who will share their experiences are Arnon Grunberg from the Netherlands, András Forgách from Hungary and Adda Djørup from Denmark.

Travelling through the literary landscapes of Europe: a kaleidoscope of narratives


Participants: Olivier Guez (France), Care Santos (Spain) and Erling Jepsen (Denmark)

Moderator: TBC

19:30 to 20:50

Room 1, Ground Floor, Expo Guadalajara

Interpretation: French and probably English





Literary diversity in Europe is rooted in the dozens of languages in which novels, stories, poems, theatre art and essays are written. Each author speaks from their own environment, in their own language, and in the genre of their choice. Their words enter a larger body of work, starting at the regional level and continuing to the national, European and universal levels. Moving from one book to the next, from one translation to another, means discovering the different literary landscapes through which creativity flourishes in Europe. What unites one European author with another writing from the other side of the continent? What are the connections, the points of convergence, the differences and areas they agree on? Literary 'bibliodiversity' is one of the European Union's major cultural assets, and to close the Literary Dialogues with Europe sessions at FIL Guadalajara, we will retrace European literary landscapes from the point of view of three of its authors.

