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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR ANNOUNCES THE THEME OF ITS 16th ANNUAL EVENT: "GUESTS AND GHOSTS"

New York, 10/06/2026 – Today, Festival Neue Literatur, the first and only festival to spotlight German-language and U.S. fiction together, announced "Guests and Ghosts" as the theme for its 16th annual edition The festival will again bring diverse perspectives and sensibilities into an excitingly dynamic intercultural conversation and take place in New York City on October 26 and 27 and Washington, DC, on October 29 with a roster of high-profile U.S., Austrian, German, and Swiss authors.

Curated by Alta Price, writer and literary translator from German and Italian, the featured writers include Jonas Hassen Khemiri (U.S./Sweden), Nicole Krauss (U.S.), Michael Lentz (Germany), Tanja Paar (Austria), and Laura Vogt (Switzerland). The New York public is invited to join these acclaimed writers for haunting readings and companionable conversation as they explore history, inheritance, belonging, and accountability, and how external forces influence and sometimes subvert their characters' conscious and unconscious choices.

About the 2026 festival, curator Alta Price says: "Festival Neue Literatur is a unique beast, and this year we're celebrating its sweet sixteen by bringing together five writers from six countries for two evenings of revelatory fiction and reflection. Their work invites us to partake of the pleasure of wild, well-crafted prose that inspires us to question how our own heritage haunts us and the ways our words shape our worlds."

Festival Neue Literatur 2026 EVENTS LINEUP:

All FNL events are free of charge, though RSVP is required.

Monday, October 26, 2026, 6:00 PM
"Intimate Thresholds: Identity and Longing"
Deutsches Haus at NYU, 42 Washington Mews, New York, NY 10003
RSVP here.

Tuesday, October 27, 2026, 6:30 PM
"Guests and Ghosts" and Friedrich Ulfers Prize ceremony
Goethe-Institut New York, 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003
Reception to follow
RSVP here.

Thursday, October 29, 2026, 6:30 PM
Zeitgeist: "Guests and Ghosts"
Goethe-Institut Washington, 1377 R Street, Northwest Washington, DC, 20009
RSVP here.

THE FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR 2026 PROGRAM

October 26, 6:00 PM: "Intimate Thresholds: Identity and Longing"
Deutsches Haus at NYU, 42 Washington Mews, New York, NY 10003

How does desire shape our worlds? What influence does the past have on our longings? Why are loss and grief such creatively generative forces? In this exchange of ideas, writers Laura Vogt and Nicole Krauss read from their work and discuss the ways we struggle to achieve a sense of ourselves despite and because of the social, historical, and emotional forces to which we are subject. Celebrated literary translator and writer Tess Lewis will moderate the conversation.

Nicole Krauss (U.S.): Nicole Krauss has been called "one of American's most important novelists and an international literary sensation" by the *New York Times*, "a contemporary master," by *Esquire*, and "one of American's greatest writers" by the *Financial Times*. She is the author of the international bestsellers, *Forest Dark*, *Great House* (a finalist for the National Book Award and the Orange Prize) and *The History of Love*, which won the Saroyan Prize for International Literature and France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger, and was short-listed for the Orange, Médicis, and Femina prizes. Her first novel, *Man Walks Into a Room*, was a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book of the Year. Her short stories have been published in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Harper's*, *Esquire*, and *Best American Short Stories*, and were collected in *To Be a Man*, which received the Wingate Award. She was the inaugural Writer-in-Residence at the Zuckerman Mind, Brain and Behavior Institute at Columbia University, and has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the American Academy in Berlin, and the Cullman Center at the New York Public Library. Her books have been translated into 38 languages. Her new novel, *Vita*, will be published in September 2027.

Laura Vogt (Switzerland): Laura Vogt was born in Teufen, Switzerland. She studied Creative Writing at the Swiss Literature Institute in Biel and Cultural Studies at the University of Lucerne. She is the author of four novels: *So einfach war es also zu gehen* (2016), *Was uns betrifft* (2020), *Die liegende Frau* (2023), and *Das Jahr des Kalks* (2026). *Was uns betrifft* and *Die liegende Frau* have been published in English as *What Concerns Us* (2022) and *Woman, Idle* (2025).Vogt also writes poetry, plays, short fiction, and journalism. *Filter*, a collection of prose poems, was published in 2015. Her writing has been supported by numerous grants and scholarships, including a 2025 scholarship to participate in the Nature Writing Workshop associated with the German Prize for Nature Writing. She lives with her family near St. Gallen, in eastern Switzerland.

Tess Lewis (moderator) is a writer and literary translator from French and German. Her translations include works by Peter Handke, Walter Benjamin, Michel de Montaigne, Ingeborg Bachmann, Lutz Seiler, Philippe Jaccottet, Judith Keller, and Anne Weber. Her essays and reviews have appeared in *The American Scholar, The Wall Street Journal, Partisan Review, The Los Angeles Review of Books,* and many other publications. She was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2016, a Berlin Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin in 2021–22, and a Scholar of Note at the American Library in Paris in 2023–24. Tess Lewis has been awarded grants from PEN USA, PEN UK, the NEA, and the Max Geilinger Foundation, and she received the ACFNY Translation Prize and the 2017 PEN Translation Prize for her translation of Maja Haderlap's novel *Angel of Oblivion*. In 2023, she was honored with the Friedrich Ulfers Prize. She is a Trustee of the American Academy in Berlin and has served on the Board of the National Book Critics Circle and as cochair of the PEN Translation Committee. Since 2003, she has been an Advisory Editor at *The Hudson Review*.

October 27, 6:30 PM: "Guests and Ghosts"
Goethe-Institut New York, 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003

Pull up a chair at our literary roundtable and listen to haunting readings and companionable conversation. What Jonas Hassen Khemiri, Michael Lentz, Tanja Paar, and Laura Vogt write is shaped by their ideas about and encounters with history, inheritance, belonging, and accountability. Together, they will explore how external forces inform the conscious and unconscious choices that shape their narratives and destinies. In this Festival Neue Literatur conversation, the four acclaimed German- and English-language writers read from their recent work and discuss how they deploy literary tactics to explore inherited notions of hospitality and its opposites, and how history informs present possibilities. Alta Price, this year's festival curator, will moderate.

Jonas Hassen Khemiri (U.S./Sweden): Jonas Hassen Khemiri is a Swedish-born writer who now lives in the U.S. He studied literature at Stockholm University and published his first novel, *Ett öga rött* in 2003. It won the 2004 Borås Tidning Award for best literary debut. Since then, he has published five novels, which have been translated into more than 35 languages; seven plays; and *Invasion!*, a collection of essays, short stories and plays. Khemiri's second novel, *Montecore: en unik tiger* (2006), won the P.O. Enquist Literary Prize, which recognizes emerging young Swedish authors. *Jag ringer mina bröder* appeared in 2012, and his fourth

novel, *Allt jag inte minns* (2015), was honored with the August Prize, Sweden's most prestigious literary award, for best fiction. When his fifth novel, *Pappaklausulen* (2018), was published in France as *La Clause paternelle,* it won the 2021 Prix Médicis étranger. Khemiri's latest novel, *The Sisters* (2025), was composed via a literary tour de force: He wrote the first draft in English, translated it into Swedish—*Systarna* was published in Stockholm in 2023—then retranslated it into English, revising as he went. Khemiri's plays have been performed throughout Europe and the U.S. *Invasion!*, which premiered in New York in 2011, garnered an Obie Award for playwriting. He moved to New York City with his family in 2021 after receiving a Cullman Center Fellowship at The New York Public Library and teaches creative writing in the MFA program at NYU.

Michael Lentz (Germany): Michael Lentz is a multifaceted writer, musician, and performer known for his experimental texts and sound poetry. Lentz's prolific output spans novels, short stories, drama for stage and radio, poetry, and musical compositions for a variety of ensembles. Born in Düren, he studied German literature, history, and philosophy and earned a doctorate from the University of Munich in 1998 with a study of sound poetry and music after 1945. Since 2006, he has been a professor of creative writing at the German Institute for Literature at Leipzig University. *Oder* (1998), a collection of prose texts, was Lentz's first published book. It was followed by *Muttersterben* (2002), which won the 2001 Ingeborg Bachmann Prize, one of the most prestigious awards for German-language literature. Among his many other books are the novels *Liebeserklärung* (2003), *Pazifik Exil* (2007), *Schattenfroh: Ein Requiem* (2018), and *Heimwärts* (2024); *Chora* (2023), a collection of poems; and *Grönemeye*r (2024), about the German singer Herbert Grönemeyer. In 2025, *Muttersterben* and *Schattenfroh* both appeared in English, translated by Max Lawton, who received the Helen & Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize for *Schattenfroh.* Among Lentz's other awards are the 2005 Preis der Literaturhäuser, which recognizes an author's exceptional text and presentation skills, the 2012 Walter-Hasenclever-Literaturpreis, and the 2024 Bettina Brentano Prize for Contemporary Poetry.

Tanja Paar (Austria): Tanja Paar was born in Graz, Austria, and studied German, history, and philosophy at the University of Graz, University of Lausanne, and University of Vienna before settling in Vienna to pursue a career as a writer and journalist. Starting at a small daily newspaper, she was an editor at two Viennese weeklies, *Falter* and *Profil*, before becoming the travel editor of *Der Standard,* Austria's most widely read liberal daily. She has also worked in theater and publishing. She earned a master's degree in International Media Innovation Management from WU University and published a blog, *Mama geht studieren* about her experience as a computer science student. Paar has published three novels: *Die Unversehrten* (2018), *Die zitternde Welt*, (2020), and *Am Semmering* (2025). For her work on *Die zitternde Welt*, and *Am Semmering*, she was awarded the Robert Gernhardt Prize and the City of Vienna's Elias Canetti Grant. *Die zitternde Welt* appeared in English as *The Trembling World* in 2025. Her travel book, *The 500 Hidden Secrets of Vienna* (2018), is now in its third edition.

Laura Vogt (Switzerland): Laura Vogt was born in Teufen, Switzerland. She studied Creative Writing at the Swiss Literature Institute in Biel and Cultural Studies at the University of Lucerne. She is the author of four novels: *So einfach war es also zu gehen* (2016), *Was uns betrifft* (2020), *Die Liegende Frau* (2023), and *Das Jahr des Kalks* (2026). *Was uns betrifft* and *Die Liegende Frau* have been published in English as *What Concerns Us* (2022) and *Woman, Idle* (2025) Vogt

also writes poetry, plays, short fiction, and journalism. *Filter*, a collection of prose poems, was published in 2015. Her writing has been supported by numerous grants and scholarships, including a 2025 scholarship to participate in the Nature Writing Workshop associated with the German Prize for Nature Writing. She lives with her family near St. Gallen, in eastern Switzerland.

Alta Price (moderator) runs a publishing consultancy specialized in literature and nonfiction texts on art, architecture, design, and culture. Price received the 2013 Gutekunst Prize, and their work has been featured on BBC Radio 4, the European Literature Network, Specimen, Words Without Borders, and elsewhere. Of the more than 40 books Price has translated from Italian and German, Juli Zeh's novel *New Year* was a finalist for both the 2022 PEN America Translation Prize and the Helen & Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize. Price's most recent translations include Mithu Sanyal's *Identitti* (2022), Zeh's *About People* (2023), Giorgio Agamben's *What I Saw, Heard, Learned . . .* (2023), Alberto Giacometti's selected family letters, *Time Passes Too Soon* (2024), André Butzer's *Friedrich Hölderlin: The Seasons* (2025), and Gesche Würfel's *The Absence and Presence of the Berlin Wall* (2025). Price received a 2025 National Endowment for the Arts Literature Translation Fellowship for Maddalena Fingerle's *Lingua madre*. Their translation of Svenja Leiber's novel *Kazimira* will be published in December.

FRIEDRICH ULFERS PRIZE:
Established by NYU Professor Emeritus Friedrich Ulfers in 2013 and awarded by Deutsches Haus at NYU, the Friedrich Ulfers Prize honors individuals who have advanced German-language literature in the U.S. This year, the Festival Neue Literatur partners are proud to present the prize to author and translator Peter Wortsman, for his distinguished contributions to bringing German-language voices to English-speaking readers. Priska Juschka, director of Lichtundfire, will deliver the laudation. The Prize will be presented at the Goethe-Institut New York on October 27. The winner receives a $5,000 grant. Wortsman is the 13th Friedrich Ulfers Prize awardee. The previous recipients are the late Tim Mohr, Edwin Frank, Tess Lewis, Ricky Stock, Jill Schoolman, Susan Bernofsky, Barbara Perlmutter, Barbara Epler, the late Burton Pike, Robert Weil, Sara Bershtel, and the late Carol Brown Janeway.

Peter Wortsman: Peter Wortsman is a writer and translator from German. Among his many translations of German-language classics are Robert Musil's *Posthumous Papers of a Living Author*, Adelbert von Chamisso's *Peter Schlemihl: The Man Who Sold His Shadow*, *Telegrams of the Soul: Selected Prose of Peter Altenberg*, Heinrich Heine's *Travel-pictures*, *Selected Prose of Heinrich von Kleist*, *Selected Tales of the Brothers Grimm*, Salomo Friedlaender's (Mynona) *The Creator* and *Konundrum: Selected Prose of Franz Kafka*, and *Tales of the German Imagination from the Brothers Grimm to Ingeborg Bachmann*, which he also edited. His most recent translation, E.T.A. Hoffmann's *The Golden Pot and Other Tales of the Uncanny*, was shortlisted for the 2024 Helen & Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize. Wortsman also publishes fiction and nonfiction, stage plays, poetry, and travel writing. His fiction includes the novel *Cold Earth Wanderers* (2014) and two short-story collections, *A Modern Way to Die* (1991) and *Footprints in Wet Cement* (2017). His plays have been produced in the U.S. and Germany, and his travel memoir, *Ghost Dance in Berlin: A Rhapsody in Gray*, won a 2014 Independent Publishers Book Award. He has also written personal essays, collected as *Epiphany of a Middle-Aged Pilgrim*,

Essays in Lieu of a Memoir (2021) and co-authored, with his brother Harold Wortsman, the artists' book, *it-t=i* (2005). Wortsman received the 1985 Beard's Fund Short Story Award and the 2008 Geertje Potash-Suhr Prize for Prose in German. He has been a Fulbright and Thomas J. Watson Fellow and was a Holtzbrinck Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin in 2010. He lives in New York City.

Priska Juschka: Priska Juschka is a curator and writer based in New York. She is the director of Lichtundfire, a gallery and exhibition space on the Lower East Side that she cofounded in 2015. At the gallery, she has conceived and curated more than 100 exhibitions and moderated panels and talks on social and cultural topics. Beyond the visual arts, Lichtundfire seeks to actively connect with other parts of the creative community, especially in the fields of poetry, literature, philosophy, and critical theory. From 2001 to 2015, Juschka was director of Priska C. Juschka Fine Art, originally in Williamsburg and later in Chelsea and on the Lower East Side. Born in Germany, she studied Humanities at the Free University of Berlin before settling in New York City in 1992. She has worked as a studio director, artist liaison, independent curator, and art consultant and has been a member of the New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA), of ArtTable, an organization dedicated to advancing the leadership of women in the visual arts, and of the Williamsburg Gallery Association (WGA). Her essays on visual art often accompany artist monographs and biographies.

October 29, 6:30 PM: "Guests and Ghosts"
Goethe-Institut Washington, 1377 R Street Northwest, Washington, DC, 20009

Michael Lentz, Tanja Paar, and Laura Vogt, and Alta Price will reconvene for "Guests and Ghosts" at the Goethe-Institut Washington. In collaboration with Zeitgeist Literature Festival in Washington, DC, and The Art of Freedom (EUNIC DC), co-organized by the Austrian Cultural Forum Washington, the Goethe-Institut Washington, and the Embassy of Switzerland.

ABOUT FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR

Festival Neue Literatur (FNL) debuted in 2009 as a collaborative project of New York's leading German-language cultural institutions: the Austrian Cultural Forum New York, the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in New York, the Consulate General of Switzerland in New York, Deutsches Haus at NYU, and Goethe-Institut New York. Additional support for Festival Neue Literatur is provided by the German Federal Foreign Office, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia, and the Frankfurt Book Fair. All FNL events are free of charge, though RSVP is required. This year's events will take place on October 26 and 27 in New York City and on October 29 in Washington, D.C.