



**FESTIVAL
NEUE
LITERATUR**
MARCH 23–25, 2018

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR ANNOUNCES “INSIDER | OUTSIDER”
AS THE THEME FOR THE NINTH ANNUAL EVENT**

New York, February 14, 2018 – Today, the **Festival Neue Literatur (March 23-25)**, the first and only festival to spotlight German-language and U.S. fiction together, announced the theme for the 9th annual event and the line-up of high-profile U.S., Austrian, German, and Swiss authors and publishing luminaries who will be participating this spring.

The theme of the 2018 festival is “INSIDER | OUTSIDER,” curated by Peter Blackstock, senior editor at Grove Atlantic. The writers and publishing luminaries featured this year—**Lisa Ko, Ruth Franklin, Atticus Lish, Yoko Tawada, John, Wray, Karen Phillips, Ann Goldstein, Barbara Epler, Nava Ebrahimi, Robert Prosser, Philipp Winkler, Fatma Aydemir, Ursula Fricker, and Meral Kureyshi**—explore in their work questions of identity and belonging in a fracturing Europe and beyond, using race, religion, immigration status, politics, and even football hooliganism as lenses to explore contemporary society and the recent past.

The celebrated U.S. novelist John Wray, author of, most recently, *The Lost Time Accidents* and one of Granta’s Best Young American Novelists, will be the chair of Festival Neue Literatur 2018. “Perhaps at no other time in living memory has the concept of belonging—of borders physical, ideological and aesthetic, and who is permitted to cross them—held such crucial and concrete importance for us all,” said Wray. “Notions that have previously remained largely abstract are now suddenly tangible, immediate, and of mortal consequence. From the very beginning, the Festival Neue Literatur has straddled the fault lines between languages, nations and cultures, and I look forward with great anticipation to turning our preconceptions inside out with this year’s brilliant participants.”

The weekend of March 23-25, New York City will host six of the most important authors from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, along with celebrated voices in US literature and culture. The festival’s German-language authors are tremendous voices in the European literary world, but their work remains relatively undiscovered to many US readers.

The 2018 Festival Neue Literatur will feature:

- **Fatma Aydemir** (Germany), author of the Klaus-Michael Kühne Prize-winning novel *Ellbogen* (Elbow), which has been adapted for the stage by several theater companies, and editor for the daily newspaper *taz*.
- **Nava Ebrahimi** (Austria), author of the Austrian Book Prize-winning novel *Sechzehn Wörter* (Sixteen Words), former editor of *Financial Times* Germany, and Middle East consultant for the German Office for Foreign Trade.
- **Ursula Fricker** (Switzerland), author of the debut novel *Fliehende Wasser* (Fleeing Water), which was awarded the prize for single best work by the Swiss Schiller Foundation in 2004. In 2012, Fricker published *Ausser sich* (Frantic), which was nominated for the Swiss Book Prize. *Lügen von gestern und heute* (Present Lies) was awarded the Brandenburgische Kunstförderpreis last year.
- **Meral Kureyshi** (Switzerland), author of the novel *Elefanten im Garten* (Elephants in the Garden), which was nominated for the Swiss Book Prize. In 2016, Kureyshi received the Canton of Bern Prize for Literature; and in 2016, *Elefanten im Garten* was chosen for the “Frauenfeld liest ein Buch” campaign, in advance of the Frauenfeld Book Festival.
- **Robert Prosser** (Austria), award-winning writer of the debut novel *Geister und Tattoos* (Ghosts and Tattoos). Prosser is also the Austrian curator of Babelsprech in charge of the funding of young German poetry. His second novel *Phantome* (Phantoms) was longlisted for the German Book Prize in 2017
- **Philipp Winkler** (Germany), winner of the Joseph Heinrich Colbin Prize and the Retzhof Prize for young authors, and author of the Aspekte Literature Prize-winning novel *Hooligan*, which was also short-listed for the 2016 German Book Prize.

The writers featured at this year’s festival range widely in setting and theme, but are all centered on stories that might be deemed peripheral by the mainstream.

Each year, the festival pairs the six visiting authors with two U.S. authors, bringing diverse perspectives and sensibilities into an excitingly dynamic intercultural conversation. The 2018 festival will proudly feature two celebrated U.S. novelists: Lisa Ko, author of *The Leavers*, a finalist for the 2017 National Book Award, and Atticus Lish, author of *Preparation for the Next Life*, which won the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction in 2015 and the Grand Prix de Littérature Américaine in 2016.

This year’s moderators include Ruth Franklin, a critic and author of *Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Biography in 2016; and Karen Phillips, executive director of Words Without Borders, an organization dedicated to building greater cultural understanding through the translation, publication, and promotion of international literature.

The Friedrich Ulfers Prize will be presented at the festival’s opening ceremony on March 22 to Barbara Perlmutter, longtime literary scout and representative for the German publisher S. Fischer Verlag. In this role, Perlmutter handled the oeuvre of many German classics in need of new agreements, new translations, complicated copyright searches, and even first translation. Robert Weil, Editor-in-Chief and Publishing Director for Liveright, a division of Norton Publishing, and 2016 Ulfers Prize honoree, will present Perlmutter with this year’s award. The prize is endowed with a \$5,000 grant and honors a publisher, writer, critic, translator, or scholar who has championed the advancement of German-language literature in the United States. Previous recipients of the Friedrich Ulfers Prize include Barbara Epler, Burton Pike, Robert Weil, Sara Bershtel, and the late Carol Brown Janeway.

The festival's signature translation event returns and takes up this year's theme INSIDER | OUTSIDER. At Festival Neue Literatur 2015, former festival chairperson and celebrated author Monique Truong noted, "When I think of how much smaller my world would be without literary translations, I am bereft." This year's translation event, entitled "Inside Translations | Outside Ourselves," pays homage to works in translations that have enlarged our lives and countered literary, political and cultural isolationism.

Each year, the festival publishes the FNL Reader, a booklet featuring English-language excerpts of the featured German-language works, often marking the first appearance of these texts in English. The 2018 FNL Reader (Volume 8) will be available for download in March in an electronic version on the festival website at www.festivalneueliteratur.org.

FNL 2018 EVENTS LINE-UP

All FNL events are free and in English. RSVPs are required due to limited seating: bit.ly/InsiderOutsider

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 7PM, Goethe-Institut Library (30 Irving Place, Manhattan)

Words with Writers

New York's brightest students take on FNL authors in a lightning round of literary interviews. Featuring all six German-language authors and moderated by festival curator Peter Blackstock.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2PM, Goethe-Institut Library (30 Irving Place, Manhattan)

Inside Translations | Outside Ourselves

The signature translation panel focuses on works in translations that have enlarged our lives and countered literary, political, and cultural isolationism. The panel will feature Yoko Tawada (author of *Memoirs of a Polar Bear*, translated by Susan Bernofsky), Barbara Epler (publisher of New Directions), and Ann Goldstein (translator of Elena Ferrante and Primo Levi), among others. Moderated by translator and Guggenheim Fellow Tess Lewis.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 6PM, POWERHOUSE (28 Adams Street, Brooklyn)

The Lives of Others: Stories from Outside Our Bubble

What does it mean to be marginalized – and who decides where the supposed center is in a shifting world? In this panel we discuss politics, power, society, ethnicity, and family, asking questions about how we treat those different from us and how society acts towards its most vulnerable members. This panel will explore how writers go about depicting people who live on the fringes with sensitivity, how personal experience informs fiction, and how novels about people who are considered marginal are both celebrated and – sometimes – misunderstood. The panel will feature Fatma Aydemir, Robert Prosser, Ursula Fricker, and Atticus Lish, moderated by Karen Phillips.

SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 2PM, Deutsches Haus at NYU (42 Washington Mews, Manhattan)

The Author's Voice

The six German-language authors of Festival Neue Literatur pair up with NYC actors to give a sampling from their work, providing a taste of new writing from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Featuring all six German-language authors and moderated by festival curator Peter Blackstock. English excerpts read by actors.

SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 6PM, McNally Jackson (52 Prince Street, Manhattan)

We Are Family: Blood-Brothers and Strong Mothers

How does a family, whether one we are born into or one we choose, provide a bulwark against what may be a hostile or indifferent world outside? Do the relationships we make as adults matter more than the people we're related to? And how does the conception of family change when we're living in a country far from our so-called home? Tradition, brotherhood, and rebellion – this panel will explore these themes and more, tracing stories from Iran to Kosovo to Hannover to China and celebrating how literature can provide us with an extended family that is only limited by the size of our bookshelf. The panel will include Philipp Winkler, Nava Ebrahimi, Meral Kureyshi, and Lisa Ko, moderated by Ruth Franklin.

ABOUT FESTIVAL NEUE LITERATUR: Festival Neue Literatur (FNL) is a collaborative project of New York's leading German-language cultural institutions: the Austrian Cultural Forum, the German Consulate General New York, the Consulate General of Switzerland, Columbia University School of the Arts, Deutsches Haus at NYU, the Frankfurt Book Fair New York (formerly the German Book Office New York), the Goethe-Institut New York, and Pro Helvetia. All FNL events are free of charge, though RSVPs are required. The 2018 festival will take place from March 22 to 25, 2018. Festival Neue Literatur 2018 is made possible through generous support from BMW of North America, the German Federal Foreign Office, and Radeberger Gruppe.