

**International Literature Festival – polip
Prishtina
10th Edition
11–14 September 2020**

<https://polipfestival.wordpress.com>
<http://www.qendra.org>

Dear friends,

here we are, meeting again in unprecedented times and ways. Positive change is what we are constantly seeking for. This year, we are changing our way of bringing polip to you, adapting to ever-changing, ever-questioning times like the ones we are living in.

We are happy to announce the program of the tenth edition of polip – International Literature Festival under the theme Change Your Language that is going to take place ONLINE and that you can attend by connecting through our Facebook page Qendra Multimedia and our website www.qendra.org

Program

Friday, 11. 09. 2020

19:30 - 20:00 – Meeting point: National Library of Kosovo

FM Poetry Drive, A poetical journey through Prishtina

Actors: May-Linda Kosumovic & Adrian Morina

Poems by: Sibel Halimi, Lulzim Haziri, Faruk Šehić, Tomislav Markovic, Nora Prekazi Hoti, Loer Kume, Plator Gashi, Katja Grcić and Ana Kove.

Curated by: Dukagjin Podrimaj & Florent Mehmeti

20:00 - 21:30 Venue: Oda Theater

Official opening of the polip festival (Alida Bremer, Saša Ilić, Jeton Neziraj)

Readings & music

Readings with: Bora Ćosić (SRB/DE), Anna Kove (ALB), Ariane von Graffenried (CH), Plator Gashi (RKS), Laura Freudenthaler (AUT), Tomislav Marković (RKS), Lulzim Haziri (MK).

Moderators: Saša Ilić (SRB) & Arif Muharremi (RKS)

Live music: Ilir Bajri (RKS)

Cocktail

Saturday, 12. 09. 2020

15: - 17:00 **Venue: Oda Theater**

Discussion Face to Face

Saša Ilić (SRB) and Jeton Neziraj (RKS)

In Albanian and Serbian with English translation

18:00–19:30 **Venue: Online at Qendra Multimedia's Facebook page**

PANEL 1: ***Change your language!***

Panelists: Izabela Kisić (SRB), Ivana Bodrožić (CRO), Dimitris Lyacos (GR)

Moderator: Una Hajdari (RKS)

Discussion in English

Readings

20:00– 21:00 - **Venue: Oda Theater**

Readings with: Sibel Halimi (RKS), Faruk Šehić (BiH), Loer Kume (ALB), Nurduran Durman (TU), Denijen Pauljević (SRB/DE), Anja Kampmann (AT), Aurela Kadriu (RKS), Svetlana Slapšak (SLO).

Moderators: Agron Bajrami & Jeton Neziraj

Sunday, 13. 09. 2020

13:00–13:45 **Venue: Online at Qendra Multimedia's Facebook page**

Screening of the monodrama “02.08.1944” by Edis Galushi

18:00–19:30 **Venue: Online at Qendra Multimedia's Facebook page**

PANEL 2 **About the Freedom & About the Limits**

Panelists: Alida Bremer (CRO/DE), Karen Kohler (DE), Ivana Skoja (CRO)

Moderator: Natasha Tripney

In English.

Readings & music

20:00– 21:30 - Venue: Oda Theater

Readings with: Nora Prekazi Hoti (RKS), Saša Ilić (SRB), Artrit Bytyçi (RKS), Lydia Haider (AT), Dimitris Lyacos (GR), Olivera Ćorveziroska (MK), Katja Grcić (CRO), Craig Chisholm (USA), Jeton Neziraj (RKS).

Moderators: Aurela Kadriu (RKS), Arif Muharremi (RKS)

Live music: Bystandr

Panels / Debates & other events

Friday, 12. 09. 2020

19:30 - 20:00 - FM Poetry Drive

A poetical journey through Prishtina

Actors: May-Linda Kosumovic & Adrian Morina

Poems by: Sibel Halimi, Lulzim Haziri, Faruk Šehić, Tomislav Markovic, Nora Prekazi Hoti, Loer Kume, Plator Gashi, Katja Grčić and Ana Kove.

Curated by: Dukagjin Podrimaj & Florent Mehmeti

FM Poetry Drive is a literary journey organized by polip festival in collaboration with the Festival of Arts in Public Space HAPU. The audience is invited to join us with their cars in front of the national Library of Kosovo and from there, with their cars or in an organized way by the festivals to follow this poetic journey towards the ODA Theatre where the official opening of the polip festival will take place. During this journey, through their radio FM frequencies, they will be able to listen to the poetry of some of the participating authors of the polip festival. The Festival of Arts in Public Space HAPU is organized by ODA Theatre and this year it has been conceptualized as HAPUDEMI. The festival will take place in the remaining part of 2020 through many artistic interventions which invite the audience and the artists to meet with each other in ways that current circumstances allow in physical public space and digital public space - the internet and information technology tools.

Saturday, 12. 09. 2020

DISCUSSION

15: - 17:00 **Discussion:** Saša Ilić (SRB) and Jeton Neziraj (RKS): Face to Face

Venue: Oda Theater

In Albanian and Serbian with English translation

Eleven years in between, ten editions of the polip – International Literature Festival. Over ten books published in Albanian and Serbian in Kosovo and Serbia, over three hundred writers and intellectuals involved. First and foremost, a healthy collaboration beyond political barriers, beyond media hostility, attacks and labelling, a collaboration has been built upon mutual trust, understanding and out of the need for change. For the change that goes beyond conflicts of the past, beyond today's misunderstanding, beyond linguistic differences and any other difference – for the change that must reach to the people of all religions and ethnicities: Albanians and Serbs, Roma and Turks, Macedonians and Croats. And all the others living in these areas.

This is a short balance of an intense and dynamic collaboration between Qendra Multimedia from Prishtina and Komuna Links [former Beton group] from Belgrade, through all these years. A tangible balance.

Sasa Ilić from Belgrade and Jeton Neziraj from Prishtina, two co-leaders and curators of the polip festival (who were later joined by Alida Bremer from Split) discuss with each other about these ten years of collaborations, the challenges, benefits, the impact and opportunities that this collaboration has created for writers, for the audience and for the societies in Kosovo and Serbia.

They will discuss without any moderator or mediator, just like they have been discussing and communicating for all these years.

PANEL 1

18:00–19:30 **Venue: Online at Qendra Multimedia's Facebook page**

PANEL 1 *Change your language!*

Panelists: Izabela Kisić (SRB), Ivana Bodrožić (CRO), Dimitris Lyacos (GR)

Moderator: Una Hajdari (RKS)

Discussion in English.

Authors who use language for creating parallel worlds agree that the language they use in their literary works is the best one to express their deepest turmoil. Politicians consider the language they use on a daily basis (including English, used for official international communication) as the best sign system for resolving the issues their respective electorates encounter. The language(s) of mass media and social networks are becoming ever more dominant and it sometimes seems as if they actually shape our reality; these languages are in fact codes, comprising photographs, montage and message(s), with the

visual aspect becoming a significant element of such languages. On the other hand, during this year the COVID-19 pandemic obliterated one crucial dimension from the human communication – namely, live personal contact, in which non-verbal expression and body language play an extremely important role.

The language used in literature and the one utilized in politics or the one employed by media and social networks, on the other hand, have never been the same. These are usually seemingly similar communication systems, but it always turns out in the end that the differences between them are substantial. There is a particularly significant difference between a kind of literature which strives to critically examine and reflect on our times, even during the pandemic, and politics. For this kind of literature to exist at all, it had to make its own *language shift*, especially in post-conflict zones, as was the case with the post-Yugoslav countries. The literature that has emerged in this region since the 1990s (and especially after the year 2000) has started a quiet revolution in *discourse* while attempting to distance itself from the 1980s literary production, which became way too close to the militaristic narratives of the mainstream politics.

The language of politics in the post-Yugoslav societies remained rather trapped in the past, not having the capacity to even validly describe the issues those societies have been facing (not to mention that resolving them is impossible if we are unable to even name the problems). Limited vocabulary, rigid use of grammar with frequent use of polite form of address, as the only signifier of the pro-European agenda, have led to the exhaustion of possibilities for solving deep political problems. The change of language is the only viable form of the system's reform. Not speaking like we spoke yesterday – not writing like we wrote the day before yesterday – means not thinking like we did in all those past decades. Is this leap forward possible?

Sunday, 13. 09. 2020

13:00–13:45 Online screening of the monodrama “02.08.1944” by Edis Galushi

The monodrama “02.08.1944” was staged by Edis Galushi in January 2019 at the “Bekim Fehmiu” theatre in Prizren. This play talks about the victims among Roma population during World War II. While the exact figures or percentages remain unknown, historians estimate that the Germans and their allies killed up to 220,000 Roma people in Europe during the World War II genocide. In the Auschwitz camp alone, close to 23,000 Roma are said to have been imprisoned. The night of August 2, 1944 was known as the “final solution” for the Roma in Auschwitz. That night by order of SS leader Heinrich Himmler a total of 2,898 Roma were exterminated in the gas chamber. After the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1945, only 4 Roma people survived. Through the personal story of the only character of this play is told the horrible treatment of the Roma before and during the Second World War. This project is supported by the Culture for Change program funded by the European Union, managed by the EU Office in Kosovo and implemented by Qendra Multimedia and the Goethe-Institut.

PANEL 2

18:00–19:30 About the Freedom & About the Limits

Venue: **Online at Qendra Multimedia's Facebook page**

Panelists: Alida Bremer (CRO/DE), Karen Kohler (DE), Ivana Skoja (CRO)

Moderator: Natasha Tripney

In English.

"The limits of my language are the limits of my world" wrote Ludwig Wittgenstein, thus formulating a thought that still occupies us today: What can language do, what is it allowed to do? What can literature do, what should it do and what should it rather not do? Who decides about it, who judges?

How does literature relate to the construction of the sexes and how to the critic of this construction? How does literature relate to racist and sexist concepts? And does literature, because there must be freedom of art, stand above all other discourses? Where are the limits of freedom of expression and freedom of art, if it exists at all, and who decides about it? Is the person of the artist inviolable in the name of the freedom of art? When does criticism become censorship?

At the latest the debate on the awarding of the Nobel Prize to Peter Handke in 2019 showed that there is no agreement on these questions. While some believed that a poet has the right to stand up to journalists, lawyers and experts with his literary works, others believed that a poet must be committed to the truth and not to any ideology. But what is the truth? Is there a poetic truth that stands above a historical truth and above the experiences of "ordinary people"?

We want to discuss all these questions without promising that we will find a definitive answer to any of them.