

Programme

„**Battle with the Empty Sky**“. Language, nationalism and free art in the early 21st century's Europe  
Workshops | Public Debate

**Thursday, 28 October**

4 – 6 pm, EÖTVÖS LORAND University

“A Vocabulary for the Future”

Creative Workshop with **Sophie Collins**, Writer and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature

*What words do we need for thinking about the future? Do they serve ideas and concepts of the past or must we create new ones to name another possible world? Where will we find these words that have not yet been spoken?*

**Friday, 29 October**

2 – 4 pm, FUGA - Budapest Architectural Centre

“The Freedom of Writing”

Workshop with **Luc Devoldere**, Writer and Member of the Royal Academy for Dutch Language and Literature

*How “free” is a writer? Is artistic freedom a romantic myth? Is a writer not always influenced, even determined by the social, literary and moral conventions of his or her environment? Can literature “free” the world, make the world a better place to live in? Does a writer have a social - or even political - responsibility? Is literature the last refuge of free expression where “anything goes”? And what role does language play in this?*

4 – 6 pm, FUGA - Budapest Architectural Centre

„Political Activity vs. Artistic Autonomy”

Workshop with **László Márton**, Writer and Member of Society of Hungarian Authors

*During the workshop, the interest of the participants and the experience of an author should meet. The questions include the following:*

- *Is there a border (in the case of a writer) between the author and the citizen?*
- *What does freedom mean? (Political freedom, freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom in an intellectual sense).*
- *What does power mean? How is it exercised and by whom?*
- *The question of artistic authenticity. The role of ideologies and indoctrination.*

*Possible forms of behaviour of an author in a repressive system. Intellectual resistance, inner emigration, compromise, opportunism. German authors in the Third Reich, Hungarian literature in the Rákosi and Kádár eras. And today?*

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7 – 9 pm, FUGA - Budapest Architectural Centre

„Battle with the Empty Sky”: Language, nationalism and free art in the early 21st century’s Europe

Public debate with: **Anna Gasc** (Literary critic), **Robert Menasse** (Writer), **László Marton** (Writer), and a video message by **Jeanine Meerapfel** (President Akademie der Künste). Statements by **Sophie Collins** and **Luc Devoldere** Moderation: **Daljit Nagra** (Poet)

*Even though our language is a strong and defining part of our personality, national identity and our local culture it is still a flexible, always changing own entity which keeps reflecting the current changes of our society, politics and everyday lives. If the language knows and feels how our use of words and grammar changes by online platforms and it influences the style of our oral conversations, journalism and even literature, it seems obvious that if our politics move into a populist, nationalist or other radical directions the language, the general style of speech and literary waves will also mirror these changes. For an Eastern European author it is a child’s game to reproduce and/or make a parody of the dull, empty but over-complicated official language of the past socialist regimes, but how the latest political tendencies use the language as a tool and how it appears in timely literary works? The open debate with internationally well-known authors, linguists and political experts and the workshops for university students in Budapest will analyse these questions and aim to trace down the same sings in our everyday, political and artistic language.*

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