

Haus für Poesie  
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Phone: +49. 30. 485245 – 0  
[www.haus-fuer-poesie.org](http://www.haus-fuer-poesie.org)

Haus\_  
für\_\_\_\_  
Poesie

Press Release of the Haus für Poesie

6/23/2022

**Not to be published before June 23 | 7:30 pm!**

## 10.000 visitors at the 23rd poesiefestival berlin

The **23rd poesiefestival berlin** – between June 17 and 23 at the Akademie der Künste at Hanseatenweg – welcomed 10.000 visitors this year, including international poets, festival directors, and poetry enthusiasts of all ages. After two long years, the festival could finally occur live once more. Under the festival's motto, **All that poetry**, the festival organizer **Haus für Poesie** facilitated more than 50 excellent events along with 70 partners. Yet again, the festival became political. "We had actually wanted to expand the aesthetic fan after two years of pandemic and a lot of strife in Europe," says festival director Thomas Wohlfahrt. "Then Russia invaded Ukraine and the frame of reference utterly transformed."

Ukrainian poet **Halyna Kruk** gave an impressive opening speech. "Metaphors don't work against gunned men. No poetry can protect your car when it is being overridden by a tank while you are trying to escape from the war with your children. There is no place for poetry when you stand over the cellar of a tower block turned to rubble and hear your children and grandchildren crying under the debris, and you cannot rescue them." At the following reading, **Weltklang**, she was joined by **Raymond Antrobus** (GBR), **Augustin Fernández Mallo** (ESP), **Dorothea Grünzweig** (DEU), **Mihret Kebede** (ETH), **Kim Yideum** (KOR), **Wulf Kirsten** (DEU), **Aleš Šteger** (SVN), and **Julia Wong Kcomt** (PER).

Congolese author **Fiston Mwanza Mujila** (*Tram 83*) curated **The Dream Factory**, a grandiose African evening in which largely diasporic poets, musicians, and scholars created a **poetic cartography of Africa's new urbanity** – far from the typical stereotypes.

It was a lyric profession of love for Berlin and its multilingualism: With a scroll in her hands, **Michèle Métail** delivered a riveting performance at this year's **Berlin Poetry Lecture**, which she delivered in German under the title **Die Zwischensprache (The Between Language)**. "Words wander, they transform. They cross all boundaries. Language is movement." The speech was published as a book by Wallstein Verlag.

The **Anthology of Women Poets**, including six Belarusian authors (only some of whom still live in their homeland) and their courageous publisher **Alena Kazlova**, painted a depressing picture of the situation in Belarus. "Now that Russia is waging war in Ukraine, Belarus is no longer on the agenda," queer poet **Nasta Mancewicz** said in an interview. "I feel like we are in an invisible zone."

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Also featured was **Persian Poetry in European Exile**, based on the anthology edited by **Ali Abdollahi** and **Daniela Danz**, *Continental Drift. Persian Europe* (Wunderhorn 2021). The Kontinentaldrift series began in 2021 with *Das schwarze Europa*. Work is already underway on the new volume, *Das arabische Europa*.

The festival concluded with the theatrical premiere of **Aras Ören's** frighteningly topical long poems ("Berlin Trilogy"). **What does Niyazi want in Naunynstraße?** along with Ören's voice and historical recordings by Ata Canani, Riza Taner, Aşik Divane, Selda, Yüksel Özkasap, Zehra Sabah, and Cem Karaka brought 1970s Kreuzberg and Istanbul to life.

The festival exhibition **AI ANCESTORS – Making Kin in the Future** explored intersections between algorithms and poetry. "I believe there are many connections between poetry and artificial intelligence. Both are systems that build internal logics," said curator **Rike Scheffler** in an interview.

The program of **poetry in education** was more extensive than ever before, including an advanced training course for poetry mediators, an inclusive exhibition, a book premiere, and an award ceremony attended by the British ambassador to Berlin, **Jill Gallard** – as well as readings of young poetry and workshops with children, young people, and adults.

The festival was preceded by five days of **Poets' Corner – Poetry in the Districts**, which is traditionally the stage for international young lyrical voices from Berlin.

### **23. poesiefestival berlin**

**FRI 6/17 – THU 6/23**

**Akademie der Künste Hanseatenweg 10**

[poesiefestival.org](http://poesiefestival.org)

The poesiefestival berlin is a project of the Haus für Poesie in cooperation with the Akademie der Künste and is supported by the Hauptstadtkulturfonds.

The poesiefestival berlin is member of the European poetry platform Versopolis since 2022, funded by the Creative Europe Program of the European Union.

Presented by ASK HELMUT, Deutschlandfunk Kultur, BÜCHERmagazin, EXBERLINER, KUNSTFORUM International, Literaturport, rbbKultur, taz, and tip Berlin.

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### **Press Inquiries**

You can find images in the press area: [poesiefestival.org/de/presse/](http://poesiefestival.org/de/presse/)  
Or under the download link: [we.tl/t-KtcCejlHH2](https://we.tl/t-KtcCejlHH2)

### **The poesiefestival berlin on Social Media**

Facebook: [poesiefestival berlin](https://www.facebook.com/poesiefestivalberlin)

Instagram: [hausfuerpoesie](https://www.instagram.com/hausfuerpoesie)

Youtube: [hausfuerpoesie](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

### **The poesiefestival berlin online**

[haus-fuer-poesie.org](http://haus-fuer-poesie.org)

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