



European Literature Night, European Literature now!

Wednesday 16 May 2012, Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam (OBA)
Oosterdoksade 143 Amsterdam

Entrance: € 10,00 / OBA-pas, stadspas or member of national cultural institute € 5,00.
Reservations: www.oba.nl/agenda or by phone 020 523 09 00

The European literature night in Amsterdam is part of a series of meetings in several European capitals on 16 May 2012 to give the word to a dozen authors of the new Europe.

There will be four discussions in English among the European authors, chaired by **Margot Dijkgraaf**, literary critic NRC Handelsblad, author, Director Academic Cultural Center Spui 25 in Amsterdam. Between these discussions there will be a musical trip through Europe by Tjerk Ridder and Matthijs Spek from the group **Trekhaak gezocht!** The gathering will be organised by the association of European cultural institutes in the Netherlands, EUNIC, in cooperation with the OBA.

With the participation of **John Burnside** United Kingdom, **Mircea Cărtărescu** Romania, **György Dragomán** Hungary, **Lilian Faschinger** Austria, **Joke Hermsen** the Netherlands, **Jean Mattern** France, **Janne Teller** Denmark, **Stephan Thome** Germany, **Tomáš Zmeškal** Czech Republic.

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Programme European Literature Night, European Literature now!

What are the themes of novels and poetry which are being written in Europe today? What do novels from different parts of our continent have in common? What do they tell us about our times and what can we learn from them? These are the key questions which will be raised on the European Literature Night. Ten authors, from all over Europe, will discuss various themes in a conversation with **Margot Dijkgraaf**.

19.30 hrs – 20.00 hrs: Trauma's and childhood: how to write about violence? **John Burnside & György Dragoman**

In what way violent events which took place in a childhood resonate in literary works? Throughout Burnside's poetry and fiction and memoirs, dark shadows, childhood traumas and the omnipresence of death throughout life are recurring elements. In his second novel, *The white king*, Dragoman builds a relentlessly terrifying portrait of childhood in Ceausescu's dictatorial Romania.

20.00 hrs – 20.15 hrs music Trekhaak Gezocht

20.15 hrs – 21.00 hrs Europe - how to deal with our past?
Mircea Cartarescu & Jean Mattern & Janne Teller

While Europe nowadays is mostly associated with financial and economical disasters, writers have their own way of picturing our continent. What does its history mean for us as an individual? How does it change our lives? What did it look like only 50 years ago? And how did it affect the lives of families in every single part of the continent?

21.00 hrs – 21.30 hrs: break

21.30 hrs – 22.15 hrs: Secrets: discovering unbearable truths
Stephan Thome & Tomáš Zmeškal

In the background of the 'big history' our lives are affected by choices of love and work. Lots stay hidden – in family histories and in the life of every individual. The true motives of people are seldom found on the surface. How does literature reflect the personal secrets of people? Or does literature need mystery? What does this mean for the composition of a novel? These three authors deal with this in their own ways: it leads to stories about guilt and forgiveness, about the pursuit for happiness, and about mankind as a toy of history.

22.15 hrs – 22.30 hrs: Music Trekhaak gezocht

22.30 hrs – 23.00 hrs: Love and marriage, truth and lies

Lilian Faschinger & Joke J. Hermsen

Many of the characters of these two writers, often women, are headstrong, contentious and foreign. What is the state of marriage at the beginning of the 21st century? Where do women of today find their identity and what is the role for imagination? What is the new role for men? What does it mean to write 'between two countries', like both writers do? To what extent do the authors look 'across the border' and how do they look at their homeland? How do they perceive contemporary Europe?