

Press Release:

18th European Literature Days

19–22.11.2026 in Krems-Stein an der Donau

Programme announcement

Confidence is the theme of the European Literature Days 2026 +++ Festival opening with Robert Menasse and Lena Papasabbas +++ Discussions and readings including with Ursula Poznanski, Jonathan Coe, Dorota Masłowska, Miriam Davoudvandi, Eli Beneš, Maja Haderlap, Anthony Passeron, Aiki Mira, Magdalena Schrefel, Ilma Rakusa and Dorota Ambrožová +++ Prize-giving ceremony of the Austrian Book Trade Honorary Award for Tolerance in Thought and Action 2026 to Dacia Maraini.

Confidence is empowering and at the same time creates paralysis. But can confidence in our crisis-ridden times really only mean a hope of averting the worst? Or can anxiety about the future lead to optimistic action for a society fit for the future? What meaning does art have in a world in turmoil? This year, the writer and curator of the European Literature Days Walter Grond once again gathers together European writers, philosophers and futurologists from different generations to explore the contradictory question of hope and confidence from various perspectives.

Under the headline theme of **Confidence**, the writer **Robert Menasse** and the philosopher and futurologist **Lena Papasabbas** open this year's European Literature Days on **Thursday evening** in the Klangraum Krems Minoritenkirche. In conversation with Katja Gasser they discuss the complex relationship between radical confidence in ideas and sombre idealism. Following on, Robert Menasse gives a reading from his new book *The Life Decision* (*Die Lebensentscheidung*). On **Friday and Saturday**, the economist **Sigrid Stagl** and the writer and podcast host **Florian Vitello** discuss the significance of good news. Writers **Aiki Mira** and **Ursula Poznanski** explore the power of technology, while storyteller **Jonathan Coe** presents a portrait of the young generation and the contemporary world with his most recent novel *The Proof of My Innocence*. Writers **Maja Haderlap** and **Eli Beneš** question the impact of trauma, the philosopher and writer **Eva Meijer** and arts consultant **Amber Massie-Blomfield** consider the climate crisis and the social responsibility of art. Writers **Dorota Ambrožová** and **Miriam Davoudvandi** delve into challenging childhoods and talk about solidarity as confidence, **Ilma Rakusa** denounces injustice and despotism and **Dorota Masłowska** discusses the fears and longings of the post-communist generation. The dialogues and readings conclude with writers **Magdalena Schrefel** and **Anthony Passeron** who report on the potential role of art at crisis moments and the successful campaign against the Aids epidemic. The European Literature Days close again this year with the **Sunday morning** presentation of the **Austrian Book Trade Honorary Award for Tolerance in Thought and Action** – this year's prize goes to the Italian author **Dacia Maraini**.

More concerts, guided tours and a wine tasting complement the literary programme. Selected readings and dialogues can also be watched from home via **livestream**. The festival events will be broadcast afterwards as **video recordings on okto.tv and on the [YouTube-Channel](#)** of the European Literature Days.

The full **programme** and information about **tickets** are available [here](#).

Further information:

Festival venue:

Klangraum Krems Minoritenkirche, Minoritenplatz 5, 3500 Krems an der Donau, Austria

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Press photos:

https://celum.noeku.at/pinaccess/showpin.do?pinCode=2026_Elit