

Press Release

10 May 2017

The 8th Academy Discussion Europe: From the Economic Union to a Republic?

Tuesday 16 May, Pariser Platz

With Pietro Benassi, Christina von Braun, Klaus Lederer, Robert Menasse and Jeanine Meerapfel

Introducing the euro has not led to a reduction in the economic and social disparities between the EU Member States. The European Union's political and social cohesion is being put to the test, while a cosmopolitan Europe faces the obstacle of a newly awoken nationalism in many regions. How radically must we rethink our views to achieve the goal of transnational European integration – and what approaches are needed? Academy President Jeanine Meerapfel discusses these issues with her guests Pietro Benassi, Christina von Braun, Klaus Lederer and Robert Menasse.

Pietro Benassi. In September 2014, diplomat Pietro Benassi was named Ambassador of the Italian Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany. He previously served as Head of the Private Office of Emma Bonino, Minister of Foreign Affairs, a position he was appointed to after a term as Ambassador of Italy to Tunisia. From 2002 to 2005, he already spent three years in Berlin as the First Counsellor to the Embassy of Italy and Head of the Embassy's Policy Office. Pietro Benassi can also draw on his insights into daily European business from his time from 1999 as Counsellor to the Italian Permanent Mission to the EU in Brussels.

Christina von Braun. Cultural scholar, author and filmmaker. In her work, Christina von Braun moves between the arts and sciences, initially in Paris and, from 1981, also in Germany. In 1994, she was appointed to a professorial chair at the Humboldt University in Berlin where, three years later, she founded the department of Gender Studies. She was the department head there until 2002. Her oeuvre includes many films, both documentaries and essays, on topics in cultural history, as well as books (including *Der Preis des Geldes. Eine Kulturgeschichte*, 2012) and essays. Christina von Braun is the recipient of the Sigmund Freud Kulturpreis 2013 as well as the Hedwig Dohm Medal of the German Journalistinnenbund 2014.

Klaus Lederer. In December 2005, Klaus Lederer was elected as chair of the LINKE political party in the state of Berlin, a position he retained until December 2016. From 2003 until January 2017, Klaus Lederer sat in Berlin's House of Representatives as a member of the LINKE's parliamentary party and was their

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spokesperson on legal matters. In December 2016, he became Mayor and Senator for Culture and Europe in Berlin.

Robert Menasse. Austrian writer and author of essays critical of contemporary culture, Robert Menasse lives and works primarily in Vienna. After reading German studies, philosophy and political science at university and completing his PhD thesis, he taught for six years at the University of São Paulo. His many publications in the Suhrkamp Press include *Die Vertreibung aus der Hölle* (2001) and *Permanente Revolution der Begriffe. Vorträge zur Kritik der Abklärung* (2009). In 2012, his *Der Europäische Landbote. Die Wut der Bürger und der Friede Europas* appeared in the Paul Zsolnay Press. The following year he was the recipient of the Akademie der Künste's Heinrich Mann Prize. In 2016, Robert Menasse and Ulrike Guérot published in *Le Monde diplomatique* a futuristic design for a borderless Europe.

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Event details

8th Academy Discussion

Europe: From the Economic Union to a Republic?

Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz 4, 10117 Berlin

Tuesday 16 May 2017, 8 pm

Tickets € 6/4 (admission free for under-18s)

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