

Press Release

21 March 2018

„Holocaust als Kultur“. Zur Poetik von Imre Kertész Symposium, panel discussion and reading 12th – 14th April, Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz

Two years after the death of Imre Kertész and at the suggestion of Ingo Schulze, the Akademie der Künste is organising the first international symposium on the Nobel laureate in literature in Germany. The eponymous phrase “Holocaust als Kultur” was coined by Kertész himself, and goes to the heart of his poetics. Jean Améry’s reflections in *At the Mind’s Limits* become radicalised in Kertész’ writings. He even goes so far as to equate Auschwitz with “grace”, a grace that allowed him, as a writer, to transform the experience of extreme suffering into art.

Conceived as a retrospective of his oeuvre, the symposium links scholarly analyses with reflections in review sections and insights by literary companions. The Akademie and Berlin are virtually predestined for such an undertaking. Thus, the conference will be held at precisely the same place where Imre Kertész personally handed over his literary archive to the Akademie in 2012, whose member he had been since 2003. Imre Kertész had an especially close relationship with German language, culture, literature, philosophy, and music, particularly with the city of Berlin. To accommodate his archive in Berlin and at the Akademie during his lifetime, was an important concern for him.

The symposium is accompanied by two evening events. On Thursday evening (12th April, 7 pm), following the welcoming address by the Akademie’s President, Jeanine Meerapfel, László F. Földényi will speak on “Das heimliche Leben von Imre Kertész” [“The secret life of Imre Kertész”]. This is followed by a panel discussion with Friedrich Christian Delius, László F. Földényi, Durs Grünbein, Ingo Schulze, the translator Christina Viragh, and Gregor Dotzauer (moderation). On Friday evening (13th April, 8 pm), Ulrich Matthes will read extracts from Kertész’s early unpublished diaries (1959-1962) shedding a light on the genesis of *Fatelessness*.

The three-day event was curated by the biographer of Imre Kertész, Irene Heidelberger-Leonard, in cooperation with Jörg Feßmann, Secretary of the Literature Section at the Akademie der Künste, and Ingo Schulze. A showcase presentation with documents and materials from the Imre Kertész Archive at the Akademie der Künste provides insights into the writer’s literary workshop.

>> The complete programme is downloadable [here](#)

Press and Public Relations

Pariser Platz 4
10117 Berlin
T + 49 (0)30 200 57-15 14
F + 49 (0)30 200 57-15 08
presse@adk.de
www.adk.de

Press Contact
Anette Schmitt
T +49 (0)30 200 57-15 09
schmitt@adk.de