

Conference, panels, presentations, dialoguing & networking opportunities

The Artist as Citizen

Reimagining Europe's Future – Cultural Engagement for a Democratic Europe

Europäische Akademie Berlin (EAB)
in co-production with the European House for Culture (EHfC)

Supported by Felix Meritis Connecting Cultures (FMCC)

Berlin, Monday, 13 – Wednesday, 15 October 2025

From Budapest 1985 to today the dialogue continues.

When borders shift by force, voices of art must rise.

EHfC claims the role of artists as responsible citizens and active shapers of Europe, a forum of ideas to imagine Europe anew.



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SUNDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2025**Arrival of the organisation team****MONDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2025**

12:30 – 13:00

Light Lunch

13:00 – 13:15

Welcome

DR. CHRISTIAN JOHANN

Director European Academy Berlin

13:15 – 14:00

Introduction Four Partners European House for Culture (EHfC):

- STEVE AUSTEN
- LINDA BOUWS
- HUGO DE GREEF
- CHRISTIAN JOHANN

The Artist as Citizen Reimagining Europe's Future - Cultural Engagement for a Democratic Europe

Presentation of

- EHfC PowerPoint
- Forms of cooperation within EHfC presented by STEVE AUSTEN

14:00 – 15:45

Revitalising Cultural Engagement for a Democratic Europe**The Artist as Citizen: Towards a Cultural Pact for Europe****Moderator:** AKUDO KYOSHIA McGEE**Short Introduction:** STEVE AUSTEN**Revisiting the Budapest Cultural Forum 1985 as a tool for Political Change**

The geopolitical landscape has changed dramatically. Forty years after the 1985 Budapest Cultural Forum, which was pivotal in the Helsinki Process, the urgency to revisit its core discussions on human and cultural rights has returned. Then, artists and intellectuals created a space to challenge political constraints from the ground up - an approach that remains vital today. But tomorrow we must consider the legacy of the Helsinki Accords: The principles adopted in it are forgotten when war rages in Europe, against the principle that borders shall not be changed by force. We need a renewed, independent cultural forum - drawing inspiration from the 1985 Forum and the Gulliver initiative; to re-empower artists and thinkers in shaping Europe's future.

Talk with

ELIZA HOXHA, STEVE AUSTEN, HUGO DE GREEF, CHRISTIAN JOHANN

Recommendations to follow

15:45 – 16:00

Coffee break

16:00	Welcome note by Her Excellency DR. ANA POLAK PETRIČ, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Germany
16:05 – 17:30	Panel Discussion: Borderless ANJA MEDVED, DR. KAJA ŠIROK, OLEKSANDR BUTSENKO, MIGUEL ÁNGEL MARTÍN RAMOS Moderator: ANNETTE RIEDEL At a time when borders are re-emerging – politically, geographically, and mentally – the panel Borderless asks how art, culture, and education can create spaces that remain open. Borderlessness here is not only about physical mobility but also about the capacity to share perspectives, to extend collective memory, and to turn differences into sources of inspiration. In the European context, where national narratives and historical fractures continue to resonate, the arts play a crucial role as a medium of transgression and transformation. This is also the moto of the European Cultural Capital Nova Gorica, where two Slovenian Protagonists come from The discussion brings together voices from Central and Eastern Europe, with a special focus on Slovenia, and connects them with perspectives from across the continent. Panelists Anja Medved, Dr. Kaja Širok and Oleksandr Butsenko will explore how artistic practice can open memory beyond the confines of nation-states and how aesthetic experience can become a tool of democratic participation. Borderless is thus also a cultural attitude: one that does not erase difference but reframes it as a resource for rethinking Europe. At the core lies the question of how art and education can counter polarization and strengthen a shared European horizon. Borderless is conceived as an invitation to renegotiate the common ground: through dialogue between cultures, through shared responsibility for memory, and through the collective shaping of an open European future. We ask the question: What do borders mean today? Recommendations to follow
17:30 – 19:00	Reception Reception presided over by Her Excellency DR. ANA POLAK PETRIČ, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Germany
19:00 – 21:00	Film screening ANJA MEDVED & NADJA VELUŠČEK– Forget me not (2025), 104 min.

TUESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2025

Until 09:00	Breakfast
09:00 – 11:00	The (Re)definition of National Cultural Institutes: Changes in Cultural Diplomacy Moderator: HUGO DE GREEF Introduction: CORINA ŞUTEU In an increasingly polarized Europe, marked by ideological rifts, the resurgence of nationalism and the erosion of democratic norms, the role of cultural institutions

	has become more urgent and more contested than ever. Cultural institutions - museums, biennials, cultural centers and foundations- play a dual role. On the one hand, they are spaces of participation, dialogue, and experimentation. On the other, they are embedded within funding structures and international policies that may reflect national interests. Talk with CORINA ŞUTEU, OLEKSANDR BUTSENKO, ANIKA REICHWALD, MIGUEL ÁNGEL MARTÍN RAMOS Recommendations to consider
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 13:15	The Role of Artists and Presenting Organisations and their Networks Moderator: FREEK VAN DUIJN Culture and the Artist must be acknowledged as essential pillars of the European project, standing alongside economic, academic, political and social frameworks. Talk with ANJA MEDVED, ELIZA HOXHA, TATJANA REXROTH, NIKOLAUS REXROTH, VLADIMIR SHALAMOV, Recommendations to follow
13:15 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:00	VISUALS: The Role of the Artist Introduction: OLEKSANDR BUTSENKO Artistic examples that reflect the role of the artist to foster active citizenship and civic dialogue
15:00 – 16:00	The Artist as Citizen: Towards a Cultural Pact for Europe Moderator: LINDA BOUWS & CHRISTIAN JOHANN Report with ELIZA HOXHA, HUGO DE GREEF, FREEK VAN DUIJN
16.00- 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 - 17.30	Conclusions of the Meeting - Provisional Report Moderator: STEVE AUSTEN
18:00	Dinner

WEDNESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2025

09:00 – 12.00

PART I - Partners Meeting

AGENDA AND ACTION PLAN EHfC

PART II - COOPERATIONS & APPLICATIONS: OLEKSANDR BUTSENKO & OTHERS

HORIZON by consortium with MARIO NEVE AND FELIX MERITIS
CONNECTING CULTURES:

The potential of intangible cultural heritage and advanced digital technologies to address energy challenges and strengthen societal resilience and active citizenship

The proposal aims to transform prevailing paradigms in energy and resource management from a mindset of scarcity to a vision of abundance and intelligence. It draws on both advanced digital technologies and profound ancient wisdom: timeless, age-old principles in areas such as water management, agricultural systems or urbanism, embodied in intangible cultural heritage in historically overlooked regions. Strong focus is put on AI literacy and communication across cultures and generations.

14:00

Departure

MODERATION EAB

DR CHRISTIAN JOHANN
Director
European Academy Berlin

PRODUCER EAB

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THE EUROPEAN ACADEMY (EAB)

Understanding Europe. Shaping Europe. This maxim encapsulates the aim of the European Academy Berlin (EAB). Since 1963, the Academy as non-profit and non-party institution has been organizing seminars and conferences on European topics, bringing together visitors from Germany and abroad. The Academy is an acknowledged player in European civic education, a competent service provider as well as partner in the fields of international education, seminar and project management, and is a venue for learning, encounter and meeting with its own individual atmosphere.

DIRECTIONS



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