

Cancellation of the Leipzig Book Fair:

Focus Region of the Leipzig Book Fair 2020-2022 presents literature from Southeast Europe over the next two years

This unique cultural-political project lives on beyond this year's Leipzig Book Fair

The partners of the Traduki network confirm with a heavy heart the cancellation of the Leipzig Book Fair 2020. As the focus region of the Leipzig Book Fair we would have loved to kick off "Common Ground. Literature from Southeast Europe" on 12th March and present the region's authors, literature, and culture. As diverse as the countries, people, languages, religions, history and stories may be – for the first time they wanted to present themselves together under the banner of "Common Ground": to emphasise everything that unites them – and not dwell on historic or current conflicts.

It has been a long-standing plan to introduce the German-speaking public to the undiscovered literature of Southeast Europe: And so, the three-year-long project of the focus region 2020-2022 will also play an important role at the Leipzig Book Fairs in the next two years. And "Common Ground" and its spirit is not restricted to its events at the Leipzig Book Fair, it reaches far beyond", says Antje Contius of the S. Fischer Stiftung, who runs Traduki. "Our authors will have other opportunities to exchange ideas with their readership in the German-speaking countries. We are already looking forward to their participation in the Leipzig Book Fairs 2021 and 2022. Moreover, there are events planned at the Berliner Volksbühne as well as the Literarische Colloquium Berlin for spring and summer of 2020 and in November 2020 a slew of "Common Ground" events are planned to take place at the Buch Wien. In addition, we are in talks with several literature houses all over the German-speaking region to stage readings and discussions in connection with "Common Ground". Our partner country Romania will be guest of honour at this year's Belgrade Book Fair, meaning that the project "Common Ground" will also hold events in the region itself.

We invite audiences to get acquainted with books already published in the German language, away from the book fair, to form a new opinion of the region. March sees the release of short-story collections by two very interesting newcomers from Southeast Europe: *Grün wie ich dich liebe grün* (Folio) by Slovenian writer Ana Schnabl, who received many accolades for her debut, and *Nennt mich Esteban* (eta Verlag) by Bosnian author Lejla Kalamujić, who has also received many prizes for her work (eta Verlag). In addition, we also see the German publication of *Partisanenpost* (bahoe books) by Serbian comic artist Aleksandar Zograf, whose work has already been translated in over 15 languages. And there is always room for the classics: *Im Brand der Welten: Ivo Andrić. Ein europäisches Leben* by Michael Martens (Zsolnay 2019) was published last year, the first biography of the Nobel laureate in the German language. To commemorate the 30th anniversary of Danilo Kiš's death, one of his early novels, *Psalm 44* (Hanser 2019), was published for the first time in German.

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