

press release

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“Let’s Talk about Europe” Series in Vienna 2008, from 2009 in Berlin

The “Let’s Talk about Europe” discussion series is sponsored by the Allianz Cultural Foundation in cooperation with the Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Tanzquartier Wien, the Vienna Burgtheater, and the newspaper *Der Standard*. It will conclude on Sunday, April 27, 11am, in the Burgtheater with the topic “What Holds a Society Together?.” The current “Let’s Talk about Europe” series in Vienna is an initiative of the Allianz Cultural Foundation and continues a series that began last year in Munich.

The final panel will be composed of Austrian Chancellor **Alfred Gusenbauer**, Italian Interior Minister **Giuliano Amato**, British sociologist **Anthony Giddens**, and Harvard professor **Jennifer Hochschild**. It will be moderated by Krzysztof Michalski, the Rector of the IWM.

Chancellor Gusenbauer has said, “In the ‘Let’s Talk about Europe’ series, the event organizers have provided an important impetus toward the creation of a pan-European public. We must continue the debate on major issues of the future at both the national and the European level. Only those who can find positive answers to the challenges of globalization can help shape the world of tomorrow.”

The discussions to date – two held at the Burgtheater and one at the Tanzquartier – have focused on “The World Disorder and the Role of Europe” (featuring Joschka Fischer, George Soros, Karl Schwarzenberg, et al.; Jan. 20), “A Europe of Religions” (Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Tariq Ramadan, et al.; Feb. 24), and “Europe as a Potential Community” (Bazon Brock, Konrad Paul Liessmann, Hans Ulrich Obrist, et al.; Mar. 30). Next Sunday’s discussion will focus on the shared principles of a society. What are the principles of law, sets of beliefs and cultural patterns that all people more or less subscribe to? And what would a good social integration of cultural differences look like?

Michael M. Thoss, managing director of the Allianz Cultural Foundation, summed up the panel discussions to date on a thoroughly positive note: “The theaters in Vienna and Munich have been filled to the top balconies. Which shows people feel a need to hear European issues discussed in public. Our work at the Allianz Cultural Foundation helps fill that need, and contributes toward an active European civil society.”

Following the major successes of “Let’s Talk about Europe” in Vienna this year and Munich last year, a new installment of the series will begin in spring 2009 at Berlin’s Staatsoper. Single events in London, Stockholm and Venice are planned for this coming fall.

Munich, April 22, 2008

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Additional information are available on the Internet at the following address: www.allianz-kulturstiftung.de