



## PRESS INFORMATION

**100 authors from 37 countries travelled across the continent for 12 weeks: the European OMNIBUS Reading Tour ends on the 22nd of July/ Route through Scandinavia, Germany, Austria, the Balkans, Turkey, Greece and Cyprus.**

*Berlin, 20th July 2016.* The huge OMNIBUS Reading Tour has transported 100 European authors originating from 37 countries across the continent and will be ending in Cyprus on the 22nd of July with a grand closing party on the beach of Limassol. At the event there will be poets and artists from all over the world and a large audience is expected. As part of the finale, a scroll will be unrolled in which all of the travelling authors have been writing bit by bit over the course of the tour. Thoughts, poems, and fragments, written on the spot or thought up in advance, come together in this document to produce a gradually growing text - a symbol of literature as the cohesion of different works-in-progress, of different languages and cultures. <http://crowdlitbus.eu/eu.crowd-literature/#/event/47969>

Over 12 weeks, authors were touring in a bus in groups of up to eight people for a week at a time throughout Europe. At each stage they were joined by representatives from each country taking part - from Scandinavia (from Finland to Sweden), Germany, eastern and southern Europe, Austria, Turkey, Greece and Cyprus.

The final leg of the tour started on the 5<sup>th</sup> July – beginning in Istanbul before heading via Thessaloniki to Athens, and then from Monday onwards (18<sup>th</sup> July), from Larnaca to Limassol. ‘Europe to the Sea-kissed Shores of Cyprus’ will be the closing celebration on Friday evening. A performance is lined up for the day before (21<sup>th</sup> July) in the ancient amphitheatre of Kourion. <http://crowdlitbus.eu/eu.crowd-literature/#/event/47969>

What could not be foreseen at the start of the tour in May was how the time spent in Turkey would take on a pertinent significance for the reading tour as a whole. The German poet and writer **Crauss** wrote while on tour: ‘in times of terror and crisis, it should be a rule that each European should take part in a crowding bus tour in order to respect boundaries by opening them up. When I was on the reading tour in Greece, poetry was just a way for me to make first contact. What we experienced, what brought us together – all of that went way beyond literature.’

**Angela Kaimaklioti** from Cyprus also said: ‘At times of division and separatism when people live in fear of one another, it becomes even more important to celebrate the beauty, freedom and solidarity of the arts which make our world better! Istanbul is where the West and East are united in harmony!’

Over the course of the tour, the authors and poets travelled to a total of 14 countries and more than 50 stops where they met with interested audiences of all ages. Many unusual places were included *en route* - from prisons to alpine huts, village pubs to amphitheatres. Local authors and artists joined the tour at each stop and in doing so presented a wide and colourful array of languages, literatures, musical performances and poetry. The project's motto is: 'Creating Other Ways of Dissemination' – the CROWD idea is thus to come into contact with people from all different countries, cultures, and walks of life.

**Tom Bresemann**, one of the German co-initiators, gave the following concluding statement: 'We have 12 weeks behind us and the vision of literature as a European mother tongue has been revitalised. We would like to thank all authors who set off with us on this adventure to make open-ended encounters across borders. We would also like to thank all of the local partners in Europe who welcomed us and showed us, through their projects and their engagement in their regions, how literature is what we, together, can make of it.'

The OMNIBUS Reading Tour was initiated by **CROWD**, a network of literary activists founded by *Lettrétage* (Germany), Forum Stadtpark (Austria), *Nuoren Voiman Liitto* (Finland) and *Ideogramma* (Cyprus). As a non-profit organisation, the network promotes national and international exchange between event organisers, authors, translators, cultural politicians as well as mediators.

CROWD is co-funded by organisations such as the European Union's Creative Europe Programme; the OMNIBUS Reading Tour is funded by the *Kulturstiftung des Bundes*, *Stiftung Preußische Seehandlung*, *Kulturministerium Brandenburg*, *Kulturamt der Stadt Frankfurt/Oder*, *Bundeskanzleramt Österreich* (Art), *Norden* (Nordic Culture Point), *Das Land Steiermark* (Culture, Europe, Foreign Relations), *Senatsverwaltung für kulturelle Angelegenheiten* (Berlin), *Hamburgische Kulturstiftung*, *Graz Kultur*, *Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö*, British Council, Cyprus Tourism, *Míðstöð íslenskra bókmennta* (Icelandic Literature Center), *Landesmittel Schleswig-Holstein*, *Norwegisch-Deutsche Willy-BrandtStiftung* (*Den norsk-tyske Willy-Brandt-stiftelsen*), Goethe Institute (Finland, Sweden and Czech Republic), Austrian Embassy Helsinki, FILI (Finnish Literature Exchange), Norwegian Embassy (Athens), Norwegian Institute at Athens, NORLA, CYTA, Heart Cyprus, [DanishArts.dk](http://DanishArts.dk), *Le gouvernement du grand-duché de Luxembourg* (*Ministère de la Culture*), *Österreichisches Kulturforum Berlin* and *Verein Berliner Kaufleute und Industrieller* and others.

**More information:**

<http://crowd-literature.eu/omnibus-2/>

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