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Europe's Finest Hours: Creative Europe Day

As citizens across the European Union prepare to head to the polls for crucial parliamentary elections, a major cultural event in the Netherlands is seeking to highlight the democratic role of the bloc's creative sector

On June 5th, the "Europe's Finest Hours: Creative Europe Day" in Amsterdam will bring together artists, journalists, and cultural organizations to explore how EU funding programs like Creative Europe are strengthening freedom of expression, media pluralism, and social cohesion. Sessions will cover topics like combating disinformation, the transformative power of film, and the importance of cross-border cultural cooperation. The event aims to demonstrate the vital contribution of the arts in upholding European democratic values.

The daylong program, organized by Goethe Institut Amsterdam, DutchCulture and EUNIC Netherlands, the EU Commission, the ECF and the Czech Centre Rotterdam, will explore how EU funding initiatives like the Creative Europe program are empowering the arts to combat disinformation, promote social inclusion, and safeguard freedom of expression. The event comes just days before the 2024 European Parliament elections, in which over 370 million citizens will cast their votes. Organizers hope the discussions will help equip cultural practitioners with new ideas and connections to engage the public in the democratic process. [Find out more at the event's website.](#)

Here is the announcement and program of the event:

Creative Europe Day - Culture for Democracy

During the European elections from 6 to 9 June 2024, more than 370 million Europeans will vote for the future of the European Union. Across Europe and beyond, we face enormous challenges that we cannot solve as a single country. The outcome of these elections therefore has consequences for our daily lives. At the same time, Europe's democracy is under pressure as foreign players try to disrupt elections and democratic processes in the

EU. In this special edition of the Creative Europe Day, as part of the Europe's Finest Hours programme in Pakhuis de Zwijger on June 5, we demonstrate how the Creative Europe programme positively contributes to democracy and democratic values in wider Europe.

Every year, the Creative Europe Desk of DutchCulture organizes the Creative Europe Day, where we discuss current developments within the Creative Europe programme. In addition to the three sub-sessions for Cross-sectoral, Culture and MEDIA around democracy, our advisors are also available for consultations all day long.

Creative Europe Day

09:30 - 10:30 | Creative Europe Session - Combating Disinformation: Cross-Border Journalistic Initiatives

"MEPs fear disinformation crisis in prelude to elections," the Dutch new platform NOS recently headlined. Disinformation has been spreading for some time and can directly affect democratic processes. Can more intensive European journalistic cooperation counterbalance this?

In the run-up to the European elections, we will be talking to initiators of cross-border journalistic initiatives who are advocating for a free and independent press in Europe in an original way. How does that work in practice? Which tactics are effective in the fight against disinformation? What impact do they hope to achieve and what threats lurk?

Ross Higgins (Bellingcat) and Lili Takács of the Hungarian news platform 444 are part of The Eastern Frontier Initiative. Together with independent news platforms from Slovakia, Romania and Poland, they have joined forces in the fight against Russian and Chinese disinformation. The ultimate goal: contributing to a resilient European democracy.

Mick ter Reehorst, co-founder and managing director of Are We Europe, will also join the session and talk about The Circle: a new approach to cross-border journalism and collaboration. Four European media partners — Are We Europe (NL), Hostwriter (DE), Arty Farty (FR), and n-ost (DE) — joined forces to create media knowledge hubs in eight European cities.

This session is moderated by Bahram Sadeghi, presenter, film director and programmer at the Movies That Matter festival.

11:00 - 12:00 | Creative Europe MEDIA - Film as a Catalyst for Social Change

Experience the power of film on June 5th during Creative Europe

Day.

The documentary 'Navalny', opening film Movies that Matter Festival in 2022, concludes with Navalny's message to the Russian people: "Don't to give up, the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing. So don't be inactive." With the knowledge we have now, it makes the documentary more relevant than ever. Film opens doors to new worlds, enhances empathy, and have the ability to break taboos, inspire critical dialogue, and drive social change.

Through the Creative Europe Program, the EU contributes to social cohesion, gender equality, artistic and journalistic freedom, cultural diversity, human rights, and cross-border cooperation. With European elections approaching, we engage in discussions with compelling speakers on the importance of European cultural cooperation for democracy.

Keynote by Hugo Emmerzael, he's is an Amsterdam-based film critic and programmer. He's an editor of independent Dutch print magazine Filmkrant, and a contributor to outlets such as MUBI Notebook and Senses of Cinema. His curational work bridges experimental film and mainstream cinema, discovering new approaches to programming and engaging with film.

Maarten Stoltz, senior programmer Movies that Matter. Movies that Matter festival's mission is to broaden views on human rights, they focus on stories from all parts of the world that address human action, the socio-political status quo and fundamental issues such as democracy, justice, freedom and sustainability.

Esme Smithson Swain is an activist and grassroots aid worker. She supports MiGreat with communications and advocacy, an organisation aiming to abolish borders and fight for freedom of movement for all. MiGreat has become a significant voice in the movement for migrant rights, pushing for the abolition of passport Apartheid. Esme is also the border violence monitoring coordinator for No Name Kitchen, a grassroots organisation providing direct aid and monitoring border violence across Europe. She has worked on various European borders such as in France, Turkey, Italy, Croatia, and Bosnia.

This session is moderated by Bahram Sadeghi.

13:30 - 14:30 | Creative Europe CULTURE - Debating the Role of European Cultural Cooperation in a Divided World

"Brussels spends British taxpayers' cash on puppetry lessons for asylum seekers", writes The Sun on May 30, 2021 about the results of the Creative Europe programme 2014-2020.

Politicians such as MEP Nicolaus Fest (Alternative Für

Deutschland) also see European cultural policy as an expensive, left-wing hobby.

However, the Creative Europe programme funds a much wider range of projects, focusing on innovation and strengthening Europe's cultural and creative sectors. In this session, we ask our guest speakers: how important is European cultural cooperation for democracy and an open society?

Invited are Lars Ebert (secretary general at Culture Action Europe), Ianthe Mosselman (writer and programme developer at De Balie), Wendy Hassler-Forest (strategic development manager at Musicians Without Borders), and Rosalina Lui (artist). This session is moderated by Albert Meijer (advisor Creative Europe Desk Culture).

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Find the [details of the event here](#) and Register via [Pakhuis de Zwijger](#)