



**Frankfurt Guest of Honor Is France, French Language  
Interviews with Juergen Boos & Holger Volland, Frankfurt Book Fair**

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**KENNEALLY:** In the European Union, France and Germany dominate economically, politically, and culturally. Indeed, the two nations often act in tandem to demonstrate a clear commitment to the grand project of European unity.

Welcome to Copyright Clearance Center's podcast series. I'm Christopher Kenneally for Beyond the Book. In October at the Frankfurt Book Fair, the Franco-German alliance will take center stage when France is the annual guest of honor. Juergen Boos is president and CEO of the Frankfurt Book Fair. He joins me now from his office in Frankfurt, Germany. Welcome to Beyond the Book, Juergen Boos. Willkommen, bienvenue.

**BOOS:** Willkommen, bienvenue. It's good to talk to you.

**KENNEALLY:** Well, we appreciate your taking the time to chat with us about the special program and the special events that you've planned for this fall with France as the guest of honor at Frankfurt Book Fair. This is happening in 2017 after nearly 30 years – France was last guest of honor in 1989. So why France, why now?

**BOOS:** Actually, we started talking to our French colleagues, to the French Publishing Association and to the government, like five years ago. We had a completely different situation in France. We had a completely different political situation in Europe. And we had a different president at that time. Our idea at that time was to showcase France and its literature – its literature (inaudible). Actually, this didn't take us anywhere at that point of time. Mr. Sarkozy didn't like the idea too much.

So when the idea came up two years ago again, we had a different (inaudible) in Europe, and now we're having a different president as well in France. Now France is going to show its literature. It's going to show the language, not the nation, which is quite interesting. They are covering every author from all over the world who has French as their mother tongue. It reaches from French-speaking Switzerland to north Africa and to the Caribbean as well.



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KENNEALLY: Well, it's an interesting coincidence that's occurred to me. The last time France was the guest of honor was in 1989, another year of important political and social upheaval. 2017 certainly seems to be giving 1989 a run for its money there. And it seems to me, and I know you have said in other venues, that the program represents an opportunity not only for publishers and authors, but for France and Germany to make statements, of a kind, about the state of Europe and the European Union. Can you elaborate further on that?

BOOS: Yeah. Right now, we are quite lucky that our governments actually talk to each other, and it's very productive discussions. The French president only got elected two months ago, and already they are traveling between Berlin and Paris. There are a lot of meetings taking place. There's been a meeting of ministers in Paris two weeks ago, and that's a very productive exchange. We have a lot of issues to cover, especially in the field of culture, as well. There are copyright issues related to digital media, but there are also a lot of political issues to try to unify Europe, to have a common understanding where we are.

KENNEALLY: Indeed. You've said that the future of the European media landscape depends upon giving the economic union a cultural identity, as well. Can you speak about how the Franco-German efforts that are coming together in this program will sort of move that forward?

BOOS: Yeah, obviously as I mentioned before, we have to have a joint digital agenda in Europe. We are seeing that China is investing a lot in its digital infrastructure. There are huge media conglomerates actually trying to control the market in all fields of the creative industry. We are lucky, actually, to have Frankfurt as the meeting place for intellectual property trade. We have people from 150 nations coming here, and I think Europe with its very liberal tradition actually can lead the discussion where we are heading to.

KENNEALLY: We've been speaking today at Beyond the Book with Juergen Boos. He is president and CEO of the Frankfurt Book Fair. Danke schön, merci beaucoup.

BOOS: Thank you so much, Christopher.

KENNEALLY: At Frankfurt Book Fair, the year-old Arts+ program makes this digital connection for a wide range of players who all create or curate content. Holger Volland is co-founder of The Arts+, a joint venture of Frankfurter Buchmesse, with



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media entrepreneur Christiane zu Salm. He joins me now from Frankfurt, Germany. Welcome to Beyond the Book, Holger.

VOLLAND: Hey, Chris. Pleasure to be here.

KENNEALLY: We're looking forward to talking with you about The Arts+ program. As vice-president and a member of the executive board of the Frankfurter Buchmesse, Holger Volland, your role is to build bridges for the business and creative sectors. As I understand it, The Arts+ program, which was launched in 2016, aims to build a platform that's part fair, part conference, part networking hub. What's new for 2017?

VOLLAND: That's correct, Chris. At Frankfurter Buchmesse, we founded The Arts+ last year because we felt that there are so many new connections that publishers can build with other creative sectors, like the art world, for example, or the creative industries in general, that the book fair in general couldn't hold or couldn't make, because a book fair stands for books.

So we decided to found a new platform called The Arts+, together with Christiane zu Salm, and our main headliner last year was a wonderful painter, David Hockney. If you know the paintings of David Hockney, you know that he has been playing around with technology for many, many, many years. He was the first artist, for example, to incorporate fax machines in his artwork.

It's hard to top such a thing or such a person like David Hockney. So we thought quite for a long time what we could do in 2017 in order to make it even more exciting, and we invited a robot. It will be a manifesto robot. That robot will be at the fair all five days and will spit out different manifestoes. At this moment, we're feeding the robot with all kinds of manifestoes from all around the world, and then we'll see what the artificial intelligence is going to give us as The Arts+ manifestoes in 2017.

KENNEALLY: Holger Volland, I want to be sure I understand that. The robot is going to be making suggestions for fairgoers to consider as policy statements around the arts? Tell us a little bit more about what it is that the robot is going to be offering to fairgoers.

VOLLAND: Every time the robot is going to write a manifesto, the manifesto will be slightly different from the manifestoes it wrote before – which, of course, is also



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the opposite of what a manifesto should be, because usually there's only one manifesto on one topic. But we're going to create many manifestoes on the topic of the future of culture, and that is also partly because no one knows yet what the future of digital, technologically-enhanced culture will be like.

**KENNEALLY:** At a book fair, as you say, it's about books. Why involve representatives from other media and arts? That seems important to the success of The Arts+. What does it mean to Frankfurt Book Fair to have people at the fairgrounds who are not from the book world, not publishers, not authors?

**VOLLAND:** As you said, it's called a book fair, but that name is not – well, it hadn't been correct for quite some time now. We still call it Frankfurter Buchmesse because Frankfurter Buchmesse has been around for 500 years. So it would be really stupid to change that name. But what people are trading at the fair is actually content and not books. Books are just one format of that content and how you can trade it. Of course, those stories and those contents can be turned into many, many different formats.

For many years now, game publishers, for example, are also coming to the fair in order to buy stories to build games out of it. Or film developers are coming to the fair to buy stories for their next films. We started to build these connections, especially toward the game and the film industry, almost 10 years ago now. But the creative industries are changing constantly, and the boundaries between different sectors within the creative industries – they're blurry. What once used to be only TV production becomes game-like as soon as you introduce new technologies like VR, for example, because then you don't have linear storytelling anymore.

So what happened to the book industry, to the film industry, to the game industry is happening to all the other creative industries at the moment. Everybody's looking for new connections, new partners, new companies you could build businesses on from the creative sector in general. Book publishers, after all, they know best how to create products out of content. So it only felt natural for us to connect book publishers with creative industries of all kinds.

**KENNEALLY:** Frankfurt Book Fair is the quintessential global event. When you walk across the fairgrounds, you never know who you're going to meet and from what country they will be from. But this year, the guest of honor, the very special focus of the book fair itself, is France. I wonder whether there'll be any opportunity for



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French and German publishers, authors, and officials to make any special contribution to The Arts+ discussion.

**VOLLAND:** In general, at the book fair, the guest of honor plays a big role in all parts of the fair. There are delegations. There are many authors and creatives coming. It's the same with The Arts+. Especially at The Arts+ program, we invited many French companies, many French artists to represent themselves and the work they're doing, and of course there are many French publishers also being active in the program.

On Wednesday, we're focusing on something really special, because Wednesday is the political day of The Arts+, and it's a day all around how to foster innovation in the creative sector. This, of course – this topic, funding foundation in the creative sector, cannot be done by an industry itself. You always need politics, industry, and creatives to work really, really closely together in order to solve the questions that are related to this big topic. This is all going to happen on Wednesday, and of course, France will play a big role in that.

**KENNEALLY:** We have been speaking today with Holger Volland. He is co-founder of The Arts+, a joint venture of Frankfurter Buchmesse, with media entrepreneur Christiane zu Salm. He's also vice-president and member of the executive board at the Frankfurter Buchmesse. We appreciate your joining us today on Beyond the Book, Holger.

**VOLLAND:** Thanks a lot, Chris. It was a pleasure.

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Beyond the Book co-producer and recording engineer is Jeremy Brieske of Burst Marketing. I'm Christopher Kenneally. Join us again soon on Beyond the Book.

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