



AALFIE VII : Literature & Art as an Antidote to Tribalism

15 – 17 October 2026

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY • 15 OCTOBER

@ La Bellone • 17:40–23:00

A night dedicated to Sudan: its people, languages, stories, art, memory and extraordinary imagination.

FRIDAY • 16 OCTOBER

@ Den Teirling • 16:30–23:30

Song, dance and memory; conversations on Europe's future; and an evening with artists, writers and poets from the Habesha diaspora.

SATURDAY • 17 OCTOBER

@ Den Teirling • 14:00 –23:30

From the languages of the city to the hidden costs of making space; from Black Europe and poetic longing to eroticism, desire and a night of many voices.

THURSDAY 15.10

FOR SUDAN

@ La Bellone

Rue de Flandre 46, 1000 Brussels

17:40 Doors Open

18:00 Reading: Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin. Language: Arabic.

18:10 Clarinette Music: Ahmed Hawwash · Gaza, Palestine

18:25 Keynote: Opening the Night & the Festival

Jean Bofane · Congo / Belgium

Language: Koli

18:40 – 19:45 PANEL: FOR SUDAN

For Sudan, for its people, its languages, its stories, its art, its memory, its extraordinary imagination.

At a time of genocide and profound loss, we make space to listen, to remember, to speak — and to ask what it means to make, imagine and speak of Sudan now. What can art hold, preserve and create in a moment such as this?

A gathering for Sudan. With Sudan. In love with Sudan.

With Yassmin Abdel-Magied, Abdelaziz Baraka Sakin,

Abir Ibrahim

Chair: Lubi Barre

In English. Readings in Arabic & English.

18:40 – 18:50 'At Sea – Opening performance'

Yassmin Abdel-Magied

19:45–20:30 BREAK

20:30 « A Poetic Reflection on Multilingualism »

Shira Wolfe.

20:45 « Reading by participants from the Creative Writing Academy for Refugees & Asylum Seekers »

With Maja Ulasik . Nadia Petrashevich Sawsan Maher · Sascha (Sarkhan) Huseynov · Freshta Hakimi · Amr Aboulhuda · Nusrat Batool · Ninah Dau · Oucef Bouteraa Manai · Elodie Mafuta Kubanzila
Multilingual voices from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Syria, Congo, Venezuela, Tunisia, Egypt and Poland.

22:00 A LOVE LETTER TO SUDAN

Abir Ibrahim

22:15–23:00 Drinks

FRIDAY 16.10

@ Den Teirlinck

Maesstraat 89, 1050 Brussels

16:30 Doors Open

17:00 Welcome to Den Teirlinck by Lisa Longworth

BURUNDI IN SONG, DANCE & MEMORIES

17:10 Dance: Kali Muhirwa

17:20 A Poem & A Song: Burundi: J.P. Bimeni

17:30 – 17:45 A conversation about Art, Food & Memories
J.P. Bimeni & Desta Haile.

17:45 – 18:00 Short Break

18:00 – 19:30 PANEL: WHO GETS TO IMAGINE EUROPE?

18:00 The Madness of the Historian in an Archive by Malya Bhattacharya

18:15 Conversation with the Panellists.

Across Europe, borders are hardening, nationalist and xenophobic discourses are gaining ground, and the idea of a shared future feels increasingly uncertain. But could this uncertainty also create an opening to ask who gets to imagine Europe, whose voices shape its future, and what might emerge when those at its margins are given space to speak, create and dream?

Bringing together international writers, artists, poets, thinkers and academics, this conversation explores how literature and the arts can challenge exclusion and open up new ways of imagining Europe. Can stories create a language beyond nationalism? Can art help us envision a Europe not defined by walls, borders and fear? And can stories make strangers kin?

With Dalilla Hermans, Preti Taneja, Shady Lewis Botros Assad, Vjosa Musliu
Malya Bhattacharya

Chair: Canan Marasligil

Language In English. Readings in Arabic, Albanian & English.

18:00 'The Madness of the Historian in an Archive'

Malya Bhattacharya

18:15 'Conversation with the panellists'

19:30–20:10 Dinner

20:10 A Song: Burundi

J.P. Bimeni

20:25–22:00 AN EVENING WITH HABESHA DIASPORA ARTISTS, WRITERS & POETS.

A gathering of Habesha artists from the Eritrean and Ethiopian diaspora — bringing together thoughts, poetry, dramaturgy and artistic practice, and the many questions that shape their work.

No matter how far we are from Eritrea and Ethiopia, home finds its way into our art.

With Bethlehem Wolday-Myers, Desta Haile, Lemn Sissay, Azieb Pool.

Bethlehem Wolday-Myers

« ADEY ኣደይ » · One-woman show

Desta Haile

« Black Beauty Inc: Modelling Agency »

Lemn Sissay

« A Poet, Wanderer »

Azieb Pool

« My Fathers' Daughter »

Followed by a 40-minute conversation between the four artists.

Chair: Azieb Pool

In English. Readings in Tigrinya & English.`

22:00 Closing Poem – Lemn Sissay

22:15–23:30 Open Mic · Music · Drinks

SATURDAY 17.10

@ Den Teirlinck

Maesstraat 89, 1050 Brussels

CITY IN TRANSLATION

A multilingual flâneur writing workshop: explore the neighbourhood, capture languages with a phone or notebook, write a real or fictional story, then discuss and reclaim the city.

With Canan Marasligil.

14:00 EXHIBITION OPENING: FROM THE STREETS TO THE WALLS

Cardboard signs created during a writing workshop at Midi Station, led by Julia Galaski for the Maison du Livre.

With : Anis, Claude, Dima, Driss, Edna, Hafsa, Helton, Henry, Hussein, James, Jose Mario, Khaled, Fred, Mumu, Singh, Steve, Sudan, Tamo, V., Youssef...

In : Arabic, English, French, Ukrainian, German, Portuguese, Turkish, Tigrinya, Yoruba.

14:15–14:30 'Opening Performance: A Cappella' by Desta Haile.

14:30–17:20 THE COST OF MAKING SPACE

The panel brings together writers, poets, editors and cultural leaders whose work extends beyond their own creative practice to organising festivals, running bookshops, curating programmes, editing journals and building platforms that amplify marginalised voices and bold ideas.

Together, they explore both the impact and hidden costs of this labour, reflecting on what it means to create opportunities for others while sustaining a creative life of one's own.

14:30 – 15:30 Panel / Discussion

With Sylvia Arthur, Vamika Sinha, Irenosen Iseghobi-Okojie.

Chair: Lubi Barre.

15:30 Performance Intermezzo

The Offering: Poetic Conversation Across Languages

With Angel Patricks, Julia Galaski, Leon Verraest

West Flemish, English and French.

15:50 Break

16:20 Performance Intermezzo

Hotspot: The Show by Marcel Marchetti

16:30–17:20 Panel II Discussion

With Adam Biles and Sagal Farah.

Chair: Azieb Pool

17:20–18:00 BLACK EUROPE

Lecture – Gary Younge

Followed by a conversation with Preti Taneja.

18:00–18:15 Break

18:15–19:25 « POETS ON A LANGUAGE FOR LONGING »

For what remains in the shadows, for the fragments of the unspoken. Some things resist easy naming: memories that return unexpectedly, places we have left behind, languages we have lost or inherited, loves that linger, griefs without shape, desires left unspoken. How might poetry reach towards what lies beneath the surface, giving form to what remains elusive?

Bringing together poets from different backgrounds, languages and traditions, this intimate conversation explores longing, memory, exile, desire and the inner landscapes we carry with us.

With Radna Fabian, Nat Raha, Lisette Ma Neza.

Chair: Canan Marasligil

Contribution to moderation: Mohannad Bennana.

In English. Readings in Dutch & English.

18:15 « Panel Opening Performance »

Mebrat Fellowship selected candidate

18:25 « The Panel Discussion »

19:15 « Performance Intermezzo »

On Rihla & Poetry

Ahmed Saleh

19:25–20:20 Dinner

20:20–21:30 WHAT THE EROTIC MAKES POSSIBLE

Love, sex, tenderness and desire have long shaped artistic and intellectual life. The erotic brings these experiences into relation with an insistence on presence, pleasure, freedom, play, consent and mutual recognition, raising the question of what it might make possible in an age of fracture.

This conversation explores desire, vulnerability and intimacy as sites of imagination. Can intimacy become a way to reshape societies, offering new ways of relating to ourselves, one another and the worlds we inhabit?

With Linda Zhengova and Yara Nakahanda Monteiro

Chair: Kopano Tiwana Maroga

20:00 Performance Intermezzo

« SE MIRAN — Spanish, English & the Body's Language » by Lara Muslera

20:10 The Panel Discussion: What the Erotic Makes Possible.

21:10–21:30 Break

21:30–22:30 READ-A-THON

Efia BAE · Twi / English

Anneka Robeyns · Cantonese · drawing · Dutch

Antonio Morano · Spanish

Antonio Marques · Portuguese

Benjamin De Roover · East Flemish

Ibrahim I. Taskiran · Turkish

Khyro · Canadian French

Saleh Addonia · Arabic / English

Miglena Dikova-Milanova · Bulgarian

Naama Shoshana Fogiel Lewin · Hebrew / English

Nina Alexandraki · Greek

Paola Di Bella · Sicilian dialect

22:30–23:30 « Drinks & Music »



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15–17 October 2026 · Brussels

VENUES

La Bellone

Rue de Flandre 46

1000 Brussels

Den Teirling

Maesstraat 89

1050 Brussels

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