

# Nida Forum: European Migraine

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For some years now, the Curatorium of the Thomas Mann Cultural Center had the idea that the name of Thomas Mann provides an obligation, and the surroundings of Nida, a perfect atmosphere for international conversations about the most important issues of the European life. Of course, partly the program of the summer festival deals with those issues. However, the dream and discussion of the Curatorium was quite a different and separate event that would not compete with the festival, but rather, complement it. Gradually, the idea that crystallized was to create the Nida Forum, a two-day study weekend that takes place not in the heat of the summer season, but in the much milder month of September, when the natural charms provide less enticing opportunities to escape serious topics.

The first Nida Forum took place on the 14–15th of September, 2018. We invited our speakers to talk about the “European migraine”, by which we referred to the headache that not only politicians but also intellectuals, people of culture, and also each one of us feels if we care about more than the narrow business of our own backyard.

We invited quite different people, as we wanted the ailments of Europe to be discussed from various angles. The German poet, writer, former long-time director of the Hanser Verlag and now President of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts Michael Krueger; Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development of the Vatican, dr. Flaminia

Giovanelli; the professor of the political philosophy from the University of Cracow Bogdan Szlachta; and from the Vilnius University, philosopher dr. Nerija Putinaitė and historians dr. Rimvydas Petrauskas and dr. Bernardas Gailius, as well as a number of graduate students from various Lithuanian universities, journalists and otherwise curious people had the possibility to spend two days not only in serious debates, but also in free conversations at dinner tables or an evening glass of wine. Those who missed this opportunity are invited to at least read this issue of the *Nida Notebooks*.

This magazine was founded once we realized that the Thomas Mann summer festival texts from the word program may be of interest not only to the attendees of the events, but to wider audiences as well, who may not have the chance to participate in the festival. That is even more true about the Nida Forum presentations. Therefore, this issue of the *Nida Notebooks* contains all the texts from the Forum, and we hope that the reader will be intrigued enough to look for an opportunity to attend the second Forum in Nida next year.

*Translated by Gabrielė Gailiūtė-Bernotienė*