



A CALL FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN HUNGARY

We, European playwrights, are watching with great concern the structural changes that have been made to the Budapest University of Theatre and Film Arts, by which all the power of the democratically elected university senate is taken away and transferred to a foundation created by the government, with a board of trustees made up entirely by people loyal to the government.

After taking over the majority of the Hungarian media and degrading public broadcasting into a cheap tool of government propaganda, after abolishing significant newspapers and websites, after putting loyal people into key positions of important cultural institutions, after the forced relocation of the Central European University from Budapest to Vienna, after the withdrawal of the autonomy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, we think that the events at the University of Theatre and Film Arts are a further step by Viktor Orbán's government to eliminate critical thinking in Hungary.

We, European playwrights, believe that without critical thinking there is no pluralism, no progress and no democracy.

We, European playwrights, but most of all, European citizens, believe that a European government must guarantee a pluralistic society, a diversity of voices and the freedom of arts as well as of educational institutions.

We hereby declare our solidarity with the students of the University of Theatre and Film Arts and join voices to demand the unrestricted reinstatement of the university's autonomy.

We hereby call on the Hungarian government to restore the independent functioning of the institutions, as it is normal in a democratic republic of Europe.

We call on the European institutions to consider that it is the duty of the European Union to defend minimal rules in educational and cultural politics of its members.

We call on our own elected national representatives to take action and assume their responsibilities.