

## Press Release of the 2021 Salzburg Festival



The philosopher and author Julian Nida-Rümelin will deliver the keynote address during the opening ceremony of the 2021 Salzburg Festival at the Felsenreitschule on 25 July. Photo: SF/Diane von Schoen

(SF, 20 April 2021) The philosopher and author **Julian Nida-Rümelin** will deliver the keynote address during the opening ceremony of the 2021 Salzburg Festival at the Felsenreitschule on 25 July.

“Julian Nida-Rümelin is the ideal speaker for the centenary of the Salzburg Festival. He is one of the outstanding intellectuals of our times. His world perspective is rooted in the ideas of Enlightenment and European heritage. He offers perceptive analyses of the state of our society,” says **Markus Hinterhäuser**, the Salzburg Festival’s Artistic Director.

“Modern human beings cannot live without utopias; yet they are endangered by utopianism. Pragmatic humanism is the alternative for confusing times,” thus **Julian Nida-Rümelin**, whose keynote address at the Salzburg Festival is entitled *A Humanistic Utopia*. “On the one hand, the utopia of peace played a role in the founding of the Salzburg Festival; on the other, the great crises facing humanity lend the issue of improving the world particular urgency.”

Julian Nida-Rümelin is among the leading philosophers of our time. Born in Munich in 1954 as the son of the sculptor Rolf Nida-Rümelin, he studied philosophy, physics, mathematics and political sciences in Munich and Tübingen. After holding academic chairs in the USA, Tübingen and Göttingen, he has taught philosophy and political philosophy at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich since 2009: ethics, the theory of rationality, political philosophy and cultural theory are his main areas of research.

From 1998 to 2002 Julian Nida-Rümelin was active in cultural politics, originally as the head of the department of culture of the city of Munich. In 2001 he was appointed State Minister for Culture and Media in the federal government of Gerhard Schröder, a position he left when the first red-green coalition ended the following year.

Nida-Rümelin is a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, where he leads an interdisciplinary research group on international justice and institutional responsibility. He is also a member of the European Academy of Sciences and a director at the Bavarian Institute for Digital Transformation. Since May 2020 he has been vice chairman of the German Ethics Council.

In 2014 the University of Trieste conferred an honorary doctorate upon him. In 2016 he received the European Medal of the Bavarian government. In 2019 the Bavarian Prime Minister Markus Söder inducted him into the Bavarian Order of Merit.

Nida-Rümelin has written numerous books and is frequently asked to comment on issues of ethics, politics and contemporary history. In his publications, he connects science and society, culture and politics, frequently contributing to current debates. In Austria, his book *Digitaler Humanismus* (2018) won the Bruno Kreisky Prize for the best political book in 2019. Most recently, Nida-Rümelin and his wife, cultural scientist Nathalie Weidenfeld, published *Die Realität des Risikos. Über den vernünftigen Umgang mit Gefahren* (2021), in which they argue for a realistic assessment of risks and an ethically motivated practice of risk management.

“We are delighted that Julian Nida-Rümelin will give the keynote address opening the Festival, setting the right tone. His title, *A Humanist Utopia*, is a good fit for the Salzburg Festival in every sense. The festival was founded as a peace project, in other words a humanist utopia, in the middle of World War I. That is why we have chosen *Pax=Peace* as the title of the *Ouverture spirituelle*, which begins on 18 July as a musical commemoration of the Festival’s 100-year anniversary,” says Festival President **Helga Rabl-Stadler**.

Kind regards,

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