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Where Did You Want to Go Tomorrow? 1

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By Martin Conrads

Since the late 80s, *Lettre International*, the 'European Magazine for Culture', has represented a network of independent magazines from a variety of cities, including Madrid, Rome, Bucharest and Budapest - all of which work on a file sharing basis. Equipped with this international approach, Berlin's *Lettre*, one of Germany's most celebrated and in-depth (quarterly) periodicals, together with the city of Weimar (Cultural Capital of Europe in '99) and the Goethe Institute, recently initiated a philosophical competition in the tradition of the 18th and 19th centuries.

At the outset, theorists worldwide were asked to formulate the question they considered most crucial for global affairs at the end of the 20th century. The 'master question' - "Liberating the Future from the Past? Liberating the Past from the Future?" - was subsequently chosen by a panel of philosophers and distributed worldwide for literally anyone to answer. Whether intended as an either/or formula, a to-be-proven factual suggestion or a manual for DIY history, the question might, probably, be answered by explorations into the state of the present.

Already, the suggestions for the question itself (definitely worth having a look at online), tend towards a fundamental rethinking of cultural politics. Similarly, the contest and its contributions could be seen as an attempt to give the Euro-centric millennium buzz a more in-depth and truly global counterpart. With its international curatorial board, the help of the Goethe Institute's infrastructure and the hope for the contest to become "a symbol of a creative and cooperative global society in the 21st century", the results might better succeed in demonstrating the idea of globalism itself than giving a 'correct' answer to the original question.

Prizes range from contributing to a book to the main prize of DM 50.000. Contributions have to be in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish or German with a maximum length of 64.000 characters (English).

Deadline for contributions is November 30, 1998. All further info:

[www.weimar1999.de/Essay-Contest], [www.lettre.de], XEssay.Lettre@weimar1999.de or
T: 49-30-3087046, F: 49-30-2833128.

Martin Conrads

Xconrads AT zedat.fu-berlin.deX

[www.art-bag.net/convextv]