



CARL ZUCKMAYER SCHOLARSHIP

In 2026, the Ministry for Ministry for Municipalities, Construction, Housing and Culture of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate is awarding for the fourth time the

CARL ZUCKMAYER SCHOLARSHIP

to promote contemporary European drama and the memory of the political German playwright Carl Zuckmayer.

The scholarship is aimed at playwrights living in Europe who have already written at least one theatre play that has been staged and/or won an award. The working scholarship is intended to enable the recipient to write a play on a socially relevant, European topic, in the tradition of Zuckmayer, whilst enjoying financial security. A five-member jury decides on the award of the scholarship.

The resulting works should be in the tradition of Zuckmayer's cosmopolitan spirit and shed new light on his thematic fields such as homeland, exile, resistance and the genre of the critical folk play in a European present.

The Staatstheater Mainz, which frequently collaborates with playwrights on world premieres, organises the Call for Applications and will support the winning playwright in developing the new play.

The theatre festival PLUG&PLAY at the Staatstheater Mainz, with its focus on young directors, sees itself as a vibrant working forum, meeting place and open space for exchange on contemporary theatre. It thus provides the ideal setting for the annual public awarding of the Carl Zuckmayer scholarship as well as a reading of the previous year's play within the festival programme. The awarding of the next Carl Zuckmayer Scholarship will take place on 06 May 2027 at the opening of the PLUG&PLAY Festival.

The CARL ZUCKMAYER SCHOLARSHIP

includes:

- 10,000 EURO grant
- Supervision and mentoring by the dramaturgy department of the Staatstheater Mainz
- Assumption of the costs for travel and accommodation for a maximum of three working stays in Mainz (by arrangement)
- Option of the world premiere of the play at the Staatstheater Mainz.

Deliverables:

- During the scholarship year (May 2027-May 2028), a new play must be written exclusively (no adaptation of a novel, film or similar).

- Thematically, the play to be written should address Zuckmayer's thematic areas (keywords: Europe, homeland, exile, resistance).
- Obligation to be present in Mainz at the official scholarship award ceremony on 06 May 2027 and at the reading of the completed play as part of the PLUG&PLAY Festival 2028.

Application papers:

- a concept paper (2-3 pages) on the new play to be written (in German or English)
- a current curriculum vitae with contact details
- the complete text of an existing play by the applicant that has already been published, staged and/or awarded, with proof (review, programme flyer or similar)
>Please note: If the existing play is not available in German, an English translation must be submitted!
- all submissions must be sent exclusively by e-mail in German or English to: kgreuel@staatstheater-mainz.de

Playwrights who are already in working contact with the Staatstheater Mainz are excluded.

+++ Application deadline: 27 November 2026 +++

THE JURY

Michael Au comes from the region Westerwald and studied German studies and social sciences at the University of Siegen. After a journalistic traineeship at the newspaper Rhein-Zeitung (Coblence) and years as an editor, he moved to the Rhineland-Palatinate state service. He was press spokesman in various ministries. For several years, he has headed the department for theatre and literature promotion in the Ministry for Family, Women, Culture and Integration where he is deputy head of the culture department. He is a member of the supervisory board of Staatstheater Mainz Ltd. and the board of the Deutscher Bühnenverein, Landesverband Mitte. Together with SWR journalist Alexander Wasner, he publishes the reading book series *Gegend Entwürfe* ("area drafts") with texts by Rhineland-Palatinate authors. Michael Au regularly moderates readings and literary events. He also occasionally reviews new publications.

Alina Fluck was born in Hamburg in 1993. From 2013 to 2016, she studied Media and Cultural Studies at Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf. She then worked for two years as an assistant director at the Schauspiel Köln under the artistic direction of Stefan Bachmann. From 2018, Alina studied Theatre Directing at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin, graduating in 2023 with her production of *Eine Zierde für den Verein* by Marieluise Fleißer. This show was invited to the PLUG&PLAY Festival at the Staatstheater Mainz in 2024. Since then, Alina has directed stage productions at theatres in Magdeburg, Münster, Aachen, Osnabrück, Essen, Erlangen, Heidelberg and Mainz,

amongst others. Her production *Minihorror* was invited to the radikal jung Festival at the Munich Volkstheater in 2026. For her show *Frau Yamamoto*, Alina was nominated by the magazine Theater heute as Emerging Director of the Year 2026.

Charlotte Orti von Havranek, a dramaturg, curator and artistic production manager, studied German language and literature, philosophy and art history in Hamburg and worked as an assistant director and dramaturg at the Theater Vorpommern. In 2001, she joined the Staatstheater Braunschweig as a dance dramaturg and moved into drama department there in 2007. As a dance and drama dramaturg, she has gained experience in developing plays and projects, including through international collaborations, and has held teaching posts at the Braunschweig University of the Arts. From 2011, she coordinated the European festival for young directors, 'Fast Forward' - curated by Barbara Engelhardt - in Braunschweig, and was responsible for the festival's supporting programme; she subsequently took over the Artistic Direction of the festival as curator at the Staatsschauspiel Dresden from 2018 to 2025. In the context of 'Fast Forward', alongside productions by young European directors, she has often also invited young playwrights and their texts for contemporary theatre to Dresden.

Martin Thomas Pesl, born in Vienna in 1983, works as a freelance translator and cultural journalist. He completed his studies in Translation Studies at the University of Vienna in 2008. He has been writing for nachtkritik.de since 2011, for FALTER and BUCHKULTUR magazine (among others) since 2016; and for Theater heute since 2019. As a theater critic, Martin Thomas Pesl also reports for the broadcasters Deutschlandfunk and Deutschlandfunk Kultur. Pesl has been a member of the NESTROY jury since 2021, and in 2022 and 2023, he curated the theater programme for the Kultursommer Wien. Serving as a juror for the Theatertreffen festival (organized by the Berlin Festspiele) for the 2024-2026 editions, he traveled across the German-speaking region in search of innovative forms of theater. *He is currently part of the three-member curatorial board of Theater, Tanz, Performance, focusing on Vienna's independent performing arts scene.* His previous jury work in the field of new drama includes the 2023 Arthur Schnitzler Prize and the 2016 Exil Playwrights' Prize.

Jörg Vorhaben was born in Hamburg and studied theatre studies, sociology and education in Erlangen, Berlin and Amsterdam. During his studies, he was, among other things, assistant director at the Maxim Gorki Theater Berlin and co-organisier of ARENA - International Week of Young Theatre in Erlangen. In the 1999/2000 season, he was assistant dramaturge at Schauspiel Hannover, from 2000 to 2002 dramaturge at the Nationaltheater Mannheim and from 2002 to 2006 dramaturge at Schauspiel Köln. At these theatres, he worked with K.D. Schmidt, Albrecht Hirche, Niklaus Helbling, Friederike Heller and Sebastian Baumgarten, among others. From 2006 to 2014, he was head dramaturge at the Oldenburg State Theatre and director of the festival Go West-Theater from Flanders and the Netherlands. Since the 2014/2015 season, he has been chief dramaturge at the drama section of the Staatstheater Mainz. He also translates from Dutch into German.