

Carolyn Emcke, writer, born in 1967, lives in Berlin.

Higher Education

Studied philosophy, politics and history in London, Frankfurt am Main and Harvard; won a scholarship from the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes; doctorate in philosophy for a thesis on “collective identities”

Books

„Kollektive Identitäten – sozialphilosophische Grundlagen“, Frankfurt 2000
„Von den Kriegen – Briefe an Freunde“, Frankfurt 2004
„Echoes of Violence – Letters from a War Reporter“, Princeton University Press 2007
„Stumme Gewalt – Nachdenken über die RAF“, Frankfurt 2008
„Wie wir begehren“ Frankfurt 2012; *Published in English, Spanish, French, Italian, Finnish, Greek*
„Weil es sagbar ist – Zeugenschaft und Gerechtigkeit“, Frankfurt 2013; *Published in Japanese*
„Gegen den Hass“, Frankfurt 2016; *Published in French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, Dutch, Slovenian, Japanese, Korean, Finnish, Brazilian Portuguese*
„Ja heißt Ja und...“, Frankfurt 2019; *Published in French, English, Japanese*
„Journal. Tagebuch in Zeiten der Pandemie“, Frankfurt 2021
„Für den Zweifel. Gespräche mit Thomas Strässle“, Zürich 2022
„Was wahr ist. Über Gewalt und Klima“, Göttingen 2024
„Respekt ist zumutbar. Texte zu unserer Gegenwart“, Frankfurt 2025

Presenter

Since the 2004/2005 season, curator and presenter of the monthly discussion event “Streitraum” at the Schaubühne, Berlin.
Since 2023 curator and presenter of the podcast “In aller Ruhe”

Theatre

Author and Performer of „Ja heißt Ja und...“ – premiered December 2018 at Schaubühne, Berlin; Guest Performances in Bochum (Schauspiel), Frankfurt a.M. (Schauspielhaus), Hamburg (Thalia Theater), Heidelberg, Köln (Schauspiel), München (Kammerspiele), Stuttgart (Schauspiel), Zürich (Schauspiel + Kaufleuten)

Curator

Co-curated “Narrating War”, Theme Days at Berlin’s “Haus der Kulturen der Welt”, with historian Valentin Groebner, 2014.
Co-curated “[Archiv der Flucht](#)” at Berlin’s “Haus der Kulturen der Welt” with Manuela Bojadžijev, 2021

Film

Worked with director Angelina Maccarone to create three video spots entitled “Tolerant? That’s us” (in German with English, French, Russian, Turkish and Spanish subtitles). On YouTube since April 2014.

Journalist

1998 – 2006: staff editor at “Spiegel”, travelling as foreign editor in various crisis regions (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kosovo, Iraq, Columbia, Lebanon et al.).

2007 – 2014: writer and international reporter for DIE ZEIT (incl. in Israel, West Bank, Pakistan, Egypt, Iraq, Haiti, USA).

Since 2014: free-lance writer

2014 – 2024 columnist at „Süddeutsche Zeitung“

Lecturer

2003/2004 Visiting lecturer in political theory at Yale University with seminars on theories of violence and witnessing war crimes;

2006-2007 Adviser for the journalism degree course at Hamburg Media School;

Frequent visiting/guest lecturer on human rights, theories of violence, racism and fanaticism, rightwing populism, witnessing history, photography, cultural identities

Awards

“Das politische Buch” from the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2005)

“Ernst-Bloch-Preis: Award for Young Authors” (2006)

“Theodor Wolff-Preis” (2008)

“Otto-Brenner-Preis, 1st Prize” (2010)

“Reporterpreis – Best Reportage” (2010)

“Journalist of the Year”, mediummagazin (2010)

“Ulrich Wickert Award for Child Rights” (2012)

“Johann Heinrich Merck Preis” from the German Academy for Language and Literature (2014)

“Lessing Award” from the Free State of Saxony (2015)

“Lichtenberg Poetik-Dozentur Award” (2015)

“Peace Prize of the German Book Trade” (2016)

“Soul of Stonewall Award” (2017)

“Brückenpreis der Stadt Regensburg” (2019)

“Silvers Grant for Work in Progress 2019”

“Carl-von-Ossietzky-Preis für Zeitgeschichte und Politik“ (2020)

“Rosa-Courage-Preis“ (2021)

“Hermann-Sinsheimer-Preis” (2023)

“Glas der Vernunft“ (2024)

“Kompassnadel” (2024)

„Mercator-Professur“ University Duisburg-Essen (2024)

„Ari-Rath-Preis“ (2025)

Organisational Roles

Member of the Board of Trustees of the Gerda-Henkel-Stiftung

Member of the Board of Trustees of the Wissenschaftskolleg, Berlin

Member of the association of the Moses Mendelssohn Zentrum