

Institute of Ideas

<http://www.battleofideas.org.uk>

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Media Contact: Patrick Hayes 07782 133399 / 020 7269 9222

Battle of Ideas festival 2011 starts tomorrow

The first Battle of Ideas event of 2011 begins tomorrow at the V&A, London. Events will be running in London, across the UK and internationally, culminating in a weekend event at the Royal College of Art on October 29-30, featuring a line-up of 350 speakers participating in 75 debates on society's big issues and unresolved questions (see: <http://www.battleofideas.org.uk/index.php/2011/overview/>).

**** Press passes for the festival are available. Contact: patrickhayes@instituteofideas.com ****

The main weekend festival, held at the **Royal College of Art, London on October 29-30**, showcases keynote debates entitled:

Battle against the fates Profiting Responsibly? Business in the Big Society **Creativity and Curiosity: do we make stuff up or find it out?** Has tolerance gone too far? **Loyalty in an age of whistle-blowing and Wikileaks** Is individualism bad for society?

Seven strands run through the format of the festival weekend, allowing in-depth examination of a subject. They are entitled:

Battle for the World, Battle for Morality, Food Fight, Society Wars, Battle for our Brains, Reassessing... Politics, and Sporting Contests.

In addition there are a large number of standalone discussions on subjects including:

The Tea Party – defenders of the American Dream? **Life off Earth: are the aliens out there?**
Burlesque: female empowerment or posh stripping? **Islamophobia: the new racism or liberal angst?**
Ain't misbehaving - do British children need the army to sort them out? **Smart drugs: magic bullet or cheating ourselves?**
Olympic expectations: can't see the games for the legacy? **Through a glass darkly: why do atheists love the King James Bible?**

For all 'Satellite' events taking place **across the UK and internationally**, visit:

<http://www.battleofideas.org.uk/index.php/2011/satellites/>

London Battle of Ideas 'Satellite' events in October include:

- *Friday 30 September* **Idea factories? Manufacturing and making in the 21st century**, 19:00-21:00, **Poynter Room, Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, SW7 2RL** (in association with V&A Friday Late with MasterCard)
- *Tuesday 04 October* **Not in front of the children: are our kids oversexualised?**, 18:30-20:30, **Foyles Charing Cross, 113-119 Charing Cross Road, WC2H 0EB** (in association with TES)
- *Tuesday 11 October* **Dangerous books for boys? The literacy debate**, 18:30-20:30, **Foyles Charing Cross, 113-119 Charing Cross Road, WC2H 0EB** (in association with TES)
- *Thursday 20 October* **The New International? Literature in an age of 'globish'**, 19:00-21:00, **Free Word Centre, 60 Farringdon Road, EC1R 3GA** (in partnership with PEN and in association with Free Word)

- *Tuesday 25 October* ***Your Days Are Numbered: the maths of death***, 19:00-21:30, **Imperial College Union, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, SW7 2BB** (in partnership with LDN Science Festival and in association with Imperial College London)

Commenting on the start of the Battle of Ideas festival 2011, **Claire Fox, Institute of Ideas director**, said:

'Since its inception seven years ago, the Battle of Ideas festival has sought to debate the challenges facing society, dig beneath the surface and understand what lies behind the headlines.'

'No doubt many debates at the festival will be contentious. Indeed we invite speakers and audience alike to challenge conventional thinking. Of course sensibilities will be offended over the weekend. But let's hold our nerve; after all, as the name suggests, the Battle of Ideas is not afraid of dissenting opinions, and encourages people to speak their minds.'

'The festival will champion tolerance, but we also recognise that true tolerance depends on a willingness to make judgements rather than granting equal respect to all opinions. Above all, though, we understand that to tolerate dissent is an essential precondition for moral independence and free thinking. The festival's motto is FREE SPEECH ALLOWED.'

Confirmed speakers at the **Battle of Ideas festival 2011** include:

David Aaronovitch, columnist, *The Times*; author, *Voodoo Histories*; **Jonathan Aitken**, former cabinet minister; author, broadcaster and columnist; **Anne Atkins** novelist, columnist and broadcaster; regular contributor to Radio 4's *Thought for the Day*; **Simon Baron-Cohen**, director, Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge; author, *Zero Degrees of Empathy*; **Daniel Ben-Ami**, finance and economics journalist; author *Ferraris for All: in defence of economic progress and Cowardly Capitalism*; **Melvin Burgess**, award winning children's author, novels include *Nicholas Dane, Junk and Kill All Enemies*; **Christopher Caldwell**, senior editor, *Weekly Standard*; columnist, *Financial Times*; author, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: immigration, Islam and the West*; **John Cooper**, leading criminal and human rights barrister; regular columnist, *The Times* and *Observer*; editor, *Criminal Bar Quarterly*; **Giles Fraser**, canon chancellor, St Paul's Cathedral; **Frank Furedi**, professor of sociology, University of Kent, Canterbury; author, *Wasted, Politics of Fear* and *On Tolerance: in defence of moral independence*; **Clare Gerada**, GP; chair, Royal College of General Practitioners; **Tom Holland**, award-winning historian; author, *Rubicon: the triumph and tragedy of the Roman Republic*; winner, 2007 Classical Association Prize; **Simon Jenkins**, columnist, *Guardian*; chairman, National Trust; author, *A short history of England*; **Irma Kurtz**, writer; broadcaster; agony aunt, *Cosmopolitan Magazine*; author, *About Time: growing old disgracefully*; **Philippe Legrain**, author, *Aftershock: reshaping the world economy after the crisis*; **Kenan Malik**, writer and broadcaster; presenter of *Analysis*, BBC Radio 4; author, *The Quest for the Moral Compass* (forthcoming); **Paul Mason**, broadcaster; author, *Financial Meltdown and the End of the Age of Greed*; **Andy Miah**, director, Creative Futures Research Centre, University of West Scotland; **Tim Montgomerie**, co-editor, *Conservative Home*; co-founder, *ConservativeIntelligence.com*; member, advisory board, Centre for Social Justice; **Ruth Padel**, poet and writer; author *Darwin - A Life in Poems*; **Jeffrey Rosen**, professor of law, George Washington University; legal affairs editor, *The New Republic*; author, *The Supreme Court: The Personalities and Rivalries that Defined America*; **Brendan O'Neill**, editor, *spiked*; **William Saletan**, journalist, *Slate*; author, *Bearing Right: how conservatives won the abortion war*; **Fiona Shaw**, award-winning actress; director, major new production of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* at the ENO; **John Sutherland**, Emeritus Lord Northcliffe Professor of English Literature, University College London; author, *The Lives of the Novelists*; **George Szirtes**, reader in creative writing, UEA; poet; editor; translator; author, *The Burning of the Books and Other Poems*; **Raymond Tallis**, author, thirty medical and non-medical books including *Aping Mankind: Neuromania, Darwinitis and the Misrepresentation of Humanity*; **Gáspár Miklos Tamás**, visiting professor, Central European University; president, Green Left; author, *Les Idoles de la Tribu*; **Tom Watt**, actor, writer and broadcaster: best known as Lofty from *EastEnders*, David Beckham's

ghostwriter and Fighting Talk's Champion of Champions 2011; **Martin Wolf**, associate editor and chief economics commentator, *Financial Times*; author, *Fixing Global Finance*; **Zoe Williams**, columnist, *The Guardian*; **Cathy Young**, contributing editor *Reason*; and **many more**.

Press passes for the weekend are available and a wide range of Battle of Ideas speakers are available for comment. Contact: Patrick Hayes 07782 133399 patrickhayes@instituteofideas.com

Notes to editors:

- 1)** The 7th Battle of Ideas festival weekend is taking place on the weekend of 29-30 October at the Royal College of Art, London. For the full programme and list of confirmed speakers, visit: www.battleofideas.org.uk
- 2)** Battle Satellite events are organised with a range of national and international partners taking place throughout October and November. Full details of the programme can be viewed online here: <http://www.battleofideas.org.uk/index.php/2011/satellites/>
- 3)** The Battle of Ideas is produced by the Institute of Ideas in association with a range of partners. Click here to view all BOI 2011 partners: http://www.battleofideas.org.uk/index.php/2011/partner_index/
- 4)** Press passes for all events are available and a wide range of festival speakers are available for media comment on issues being discussed at the Battle of Ideas before and during the event. Contact: patrickhayes@instituteofideas.com 07782 133399 / 020 7269 9222

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