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present



LOOKING FOR EUROPE

BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY

LOOKING FOR EUROPE

**A EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN
A CAMPAIGN FOR EUROPE**

Europe is in peril.

From all sides, criticisms, insults, and desertions.

Stop building Europe, rediscover the putative “soul of the nation”, reconnect with a “lost identity” that exists only in the imagination of demagogues — such are the tenets shared by the populist forces thriving across the continent.

And this island of moderation, democracy, and law that Europe is, by and large, this second home, since the Enlightenment, of all the free people of the world, hardly seems to have a voice anymore and seems to lack a future.

This harsh climate will be the setting, at the end of May 2019, for European elections. Unless something changes, those elections threaten to be the most calamitous Europe has ever known: a narrow victory for the scuttlers; irretrievable disgrace for those who still believe in the heritage of Erasmus, Dante, Goethe, Simone Veil, and Vaclav Havel; a disaster.

Philosopher and writer Bernard-Henri Lévy is one of those European patriots — a group more numerous than commonly believed but also, alas, too prone to defeatism and silence — who have not become resigned to that fate.

He is taking the initiative now to affirm his belief in the great idea of Europe that our forebears bequeathed to us; to assert his conviction that this idea was strong enough, years ago, to raise our peoples above themselves and that it alone will prove strong enough in the years to come to dispel the demons of totalitarianism, war, and poverty; to proclaim, in the capitals of the doubting continent, a call for a course correction; and, for the three months preceding the May 2019 elections to the European parliament, to conduct a veritable campaign for the continent.

The campaign will have three parts.

A THEATRICAL TOUR.

This is the heart and soul of the project.

A play penned by Bernard-Henri Lévy and performed by the playwright, traveling from city to city in the grand tradition of traveling theater.

A monologue, inspired by *Hôtel Europe*, which premiered in Sarajevo in June 2014 and was revived in revised form in London and New York in 2018. To be precise, the text is the inner monologue of a French writer (who might be the author's brother) holed up in a hotel room to compose a major speech on Europe that he is to deliver in exactly two hours' time. The writer feels his ideas, as well as his very purpose, slipping like sand through his fingers until the fifth and final act, when, in a poetic *coup de théâtre*, he has a Eureka moment, a new idea that gives him hope.

The play will be performed in English or in French, with electronic supertitles in the language of the host country.

Joining the author-actor on stage, sometimes by video and sometimes live, will be an actor, local figure, or moral or political authority at the national level. Whether famous or unknown, the local "guest star" will, in a sense, force the text to address the questions of Europe's construction.

Most importantly, and as an additional challenge, the text will be adapted, recast, and rewritten for each performance to speak to the situation in the country or the city in which it is being presented.

The approach will be very close to the tradition of Elizabethan theater, in which the script was often rewritten at the very last minute to reflect the rumors and gossip circulating in the church square or the taverns.

A FILM.

All of this will be filmed.

The months spent criss-crossing the far reaches of Europe, seeking out citizens either fervent or seized with doubt; this long period spent reviving, or trying to revive, the noble idea of Europe — all of it will be recorded in real time to provide the raw material for a second work, this one cinematographic, whose purpose will be to carve in stone the best of this pilgrimage and this fight.

Bernard-Henri Lévy will direct the film with the help of Camille Lotteau, his collaborator on earlier documentaries, notably in Kurdistan.

This film, to the extent that it captures the tour in its entirety, all of its incidents, accidents, vagaries, detours, and behind-the-scenes events, will aspire to the spirit of Louis Malle grappling, in his *Vanya on 42nd Street*, with the soul of a Chekhov lay, and that of Al Pacino struggling, in *Looking for Richard*, to adapt Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

But beyond the play, this film will use the crew and its adventures as the basis for a new work composed of happenings on the sidelines of the tour, occurrences on the nights before and on the mornings after performances, contemporaneous events unfolding in Europe in full parliamentary campaign. In this way, it will paint a portrait of Europe in crisis in the early 21st century.

AN INTERACTIVE PLATFORM.

The third part of the campaign is to create and manage, from 1 March through 24 May, a web platform that will serve as a forum for online petitions of grievances and answers to questions about Europe. It will be a place where European citizens who are worried, disappointed, or simply lost will be able to find answers. Namely:

⦿ The possibility of posting, before or shortly after the performance and in their own language, any and all questions that may be gnawing at them and to which they feel, rightly or wrongly, that local politicians and incumbent European officials have either not clearly responded or have not given sufficient priority (e.g., immigration, financial sector deregulation, or the “Brussels standard” that many believe is eclipsing national cultural singularities).

⦿ The certainty of receiving, shortly after submitting their question and either in their own language or in English, a thorough, fact-filled, logical response prepared by a dedicated team. This “Europe, Please” site, operating around the clock and offering answers within 24 hours to Internet users in 20 countries, will be a major challenge to implement. But it will be archived with the following steps, under the supervision of Bernard-Henri Lévy: (a) assembling a core team, based in Paris, of young university graduates, experts, and ardent supporters of Europe; (b) identifying a group of freelance “contributors” in the sense that Wikipedia uses the word, recruited based on their expertise and their connections in the 20 countries covered by the tour; and (c) carefully moderating the question forums.

LOOKING FOR EUROPE

LONDON - CADOGAN HALL
(JUNE 4, 2018)

NEW YORK - PUBLIC THEATER
(NOVEMBER 5, 2018)

REVIEWS

BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY'S BREXIT LAMENT

France's pre-eminent thinker; Bernard-Henri Lévy, says Britain is both the brain and beating heart of Europe; quitting would be such a catastrophe for all, he has written a play to persuade us to stop.

By Bryan Appleyard

The Sunday Times | May 20, 2018

« [...] Now his play – *Last Exit before Brexit* – is his attempt to make us change our minds. »

« [...] The speech is haunted by real imagined characters. So he dreams of a perfect cabinet — Michel Houellebecq, the notorious French novelist, would be, for some reason, minister for animal welfare. Minister of religion would be the militant atheist Christopher Hitchens who was, in a way, the one British public intellectual with the scope,chutzpah and style of Lévy. »

« [...] There is a greatness about Lévy, a certain French glory. His liberal fervour is mesmerising and genuine; he wants you to be engaged and you have to be at your best either to agree or disagree. He is also physically courageous, an English adventurer, a political romantic. »



WHY A FRENCH PHILOSOPHER WANTS TO STOP BREXIT

But is Bernard-Henri Lévy at odds with a France that sees opportunity in the UK's departure?

By Simon Kuper

Financial Times | May 25, 2018

« [...] Like his British literary heroes Lord Byron and T.E. Lawrence, he [Bernard-Henri Lévy] is a man of action who aims to change the world. On June 4, backed by the Hexagon Society, a London-based French cultural charity, he will stage his one-man play *Last Exit Before Brexit* at London's Cadogan Hall. »

« [...] The play is a plea to Britain — or Angleterre ("England"), as BHL usually calls it — to realise that it's the intellectual heart of Europe and should therefore stay in and help reform the "soulless" European Union. »



BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY: 'BREXIT WILL NOT HAPPEN'

If Brexit happens, Europe will collapse. It cannot survive.

By Lloyd Evans

The Spectator | May 26, 2018

« [...] He chose London for the play's première because he regards Britain (or 'England', as he sometimes terms the UK) as the 'beating heart of the European project'. 'It is not just an additional piece. It is the main part of the DNA. Without England, Europe will be not Europe, it will be something else.' »

'PLEASE, PLEASE REMAIN': BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY PERFORMS ONE-MAN BREXIT PLAY

French showman-philosopher begs London audience to save the European project.

By John Henley
The Guardian | June 5, 2018

« [...] A bemused audience of nearly 1,000 packed Cadogan Hall in London on Monday to hear the 69-year-old philosopher plead with Britain to remain in Europe, in English. »

« [...] But for all its complex, lofty and undeniably Gallic bent, the play – a two-hour stream-of-consciousness monologue by a writer struggling in his hotel room to pen a Brexit conference speech about the tattered but still indispensable European dream – contained plenty of red meat. »



FRENCH PHILOSOPHER TO UK: PLEASE DON'T GO

French philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy speaks to Christiane Amanpour about wanting to stop Brexit with his monologue play the «Last Exit before Brexit.»

By Christiane Amanpour
CNN | June 4, 2018

« **BHL:** Why here? Because Brexit is supposed to happen here. After Brexit, Italexit and after that Frexit and... Europe begins to dismember itself to fall into pieces here in London and the worse is that London is the software of Europe, and DNA of Europe... Europe was built after English ideas.

Amanpour: Is that how you see it?

BHL: The cradles of Europe are of course Athens, of course Roma and the UK... England, UK, is quitting a space which she herself designed and conceived.

Amanpour: ...why don't you see this as an advantage for you in France for you to be capitalizing on?

BHL: Because one of the first sentences, I heard in my life, was my mother telling me that if I was alive, if I came in this bloody world, it was thanks to Winston Churchill and the brave pilots of the Royal Air forces. That's why I'm born. That's why I'm here today. So I have an inextinguishable debt toward America and England. And this is what I say tonight in this *Last Exit Before Brexit*.

Amanpour: You feel you have a huge debt and frankly so many people do. But it's not often we get distinguished philosophers from across the channel to persuade the Brits. »

FRENCH ANTI-BREXIT PHILOSOPHER FEARS FREXIT AS BRITAIN LEAVING EU WILL DESTROY EUROPE

French philosopher and anti-Brexit protestor Bernard-Henri Lévy said he fears there will be a “Frexit” as Britain’s exit from the European Union will “disintegrate” Europe.

By Charlotte Davis

Sunday Express | June 5, 2018

« [...] Philosopher and author Bernard-Henri Lévy, who has written a play about keeping Britain in the European Union, claimed “Great Britain with Brexit will become Little England”. »

Tablet

A NEW READ ON JEWISH LIFE™

IN BRILLIANT NEW PLAY, BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY TAKES ON THE FOLLIES OF BREXIT

Please, please remain. The long march begins tonight.

By David Patrikarakos

Tablet Magazine | June 7, 2018

« [...] *Last Exit Before Brexit* is many things: a play, a monologue, a piece of performance art, but above all it is a cri de coeur from a deeply European man to a recalcitrant Britain. And it is a powerful one... »

« [...] *Last Exit Before Brexit* was born, and it is a triumph, one that only Lévy could pull off. He – perhaps alone among philosophers, a breed not known for their charm – has the charisma to carry off a one-man show that leaves the viewer feeling simultaneously engaged, entertained, and educated. His intellectual depth and erudition unspools before your eyes, often in a quasi-stream of consciousness monologue that, unlike the great modernists, remains accessible at all times. »

The Washington Post

By William Booth and James McAuley

The Washington Post | June 12, 2018

« [...] France’s most public intellectual sank into a bathtub, while fully clothed in a bespoke suit, onstage in a one-night-only theatrical production to make a plea for Britain to reconsider its decision to leave the European Union.

“Please, please remain,” Bernard-Henri Lévy begged the audience at Cadogan Hall in Chelsea, a posh London neighborhood, where the silver-maned provocateur was greeted with rapturous applause.

“This damn Brexit, if they go through with it, will be a win for the hard right over the soft right. For the radical left over the liberal left!” Lévy was just getting started.

“All over the U.K., it will be the revenge of fusty Britain over the Britain that is open and in touch with its glorious past. It will be the consecration, in London, of Trump and Putin. Of drunken hooligans and illiterate bullheaded neo-nationalists,” he said. Few can match Lévy’s flair. But his sentiments are shared elsewhere in Europe. »

The New York Times

The New York Times | November 5, 2018

« [...] *Looking for Europe* A show by the intellectual and filmmaker Bernard-Henri Lévy about contemporary politics. »

EL ESPAÑOL

BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY ARRANCA EN NUEVA YORK SU TOUR ‘LOOKING FOR EUROPE’ EN DEFENSA DE LA UE

El filósofo y escritor francés ha creado una obra de teatro en la que presenta sus ideas para recuperar la esencia de Europa y donde critica los problemas del viejo continente.

By Victoria Fernández
El Español | 6 noviembre, 2018

« [...] Sin embargo, el filósofo francés deja para el final de la obra un «golpe de efecto» en su defensa del viejo continente y aclara que “hay un rayo de luz”. »

« [...] El escritor tiene previsto representar *Looking for Europe* en las principales ciudades europeas en una gira por el viejo continente. »

the **algemeiner**

The Algemeiner | November 21, 2018

« [...] And the two-hour monologue, inspired by the script of *Hôtel Europe* [...] like the Elizabethans who, up to the very last minute, would incorporate into their scripts the rumors coursing through the city, echoing in the taverns – or like Meyerhold, who, in the Moscow of the 1920s, would introduce “news from the front” and, in so doing, transform staid choreography into passionate encounters. »

« [...] The monologue, the disheveled monologue, in English, of a writer closeted in a hotel room where he is working on a long speech about Europe to be delivered two hours hence but that slips through his fingers and falls to pieces as soon as he thinks he has a hold on it. »

LOOKING FOR EUROPE, FINDING AMERICA ADRIFT

Bernard-Henri Lévy's one-man show "Looking for Europe" makes the case for America better than most Americans ever do.

By James Kirchick

Tablet Magazine | November 8, 2018

« [...] Sometimes, it takes a foreigner to remind you of America's promise and potential. This is certainly one of those times. Watching Bernard-Henri Lévy perform his one-man, one-night-only show *Looking for Europe* Monday night at the Public Theatre, I thought I witnessed a flash of Thomas Jefferson. »

« [...] If Lévy sticks to custom and rewrites the script for each locale, addressing the local personalities and idiosyncrasies of Berlin to Budapest, it will be an impressive feat. The play's most inspired moment comes at the end, when, envisioning a political union of America and Europe (dubbed "Euramerica"), Lévy lists the members of his dream cabinet. John Locke and Rosa Parks would be placed in charge of human rights, Lin-Manuel Miranda to head the Department of Education, Jan Karski and Woodrow Wilson take the ministry of foreign affairs while Pussy Riot and Sylvia Beach (the American expat who founded the world-famous Shakespeare and Company bookshop along the Seine) assume the women's rights portfolio and Salman Rushdie is put "in charge of secularization." Yes, a fantasy, but these are fantastical times. »



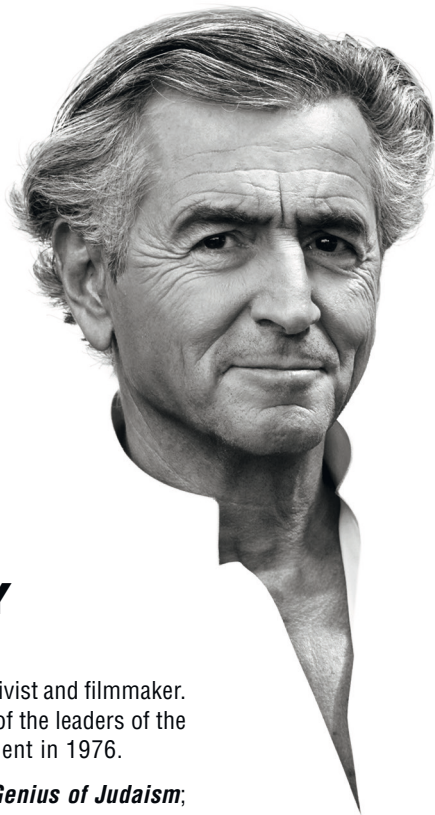
BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY ON ANTI-SEMITISM, AMERICAN ELECTIONS, AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The American incarnation of Bernard-Henri Lévy's one-man show "Looking for Europe" premières on Monday, on the eve of the midterm elections.

By Michael Schulman

The New Yorker | November 4, 2018

« [...] Lévy is no more hopeful about the frayed transatlantic alliance between Europe and the United States, which is the subject of *Looking for Europe*. "This alliance was damaged much before, and even President Obama should be made accountable for that, alas", he said, citing Obama's absence from Paris's anti-terrorism march after the Charlie Hebdo massacre and his decision not to join the French President, François Hollande, in military actions against Syria. "Trump is just reaching a climax of that, because he declares Europe clearly as an enemy, and so on." Does that mean it's a play without a happy ending? "No, I would not say that!" Lévy said, laughing. "There is a coup de théâtre at the end – a coup of theatre. I don't know how you say 'coup de théâtre.' " I told him that we just say "coup de théâtre." "O.K. So there is a coup de théâtre. There is a ray of light. Let's say it like that: a ray of light." »



BERNARD-HENRI LÉVY

Bernard-Henri Lévy is a French philosopher, writer, activist and filmmaker. Often referred to in France simply as **BHL**, he was one of the leaders of the «Nouveaux Philosophes» (New Philosophers) movement in 1976.

He is the author of over thirty books including ***The Genius of Judaism***; ***Left in Dark Times: A Stand Against the New Barbarism***; ***American Vertigo***; ***Barbarism with a Human Face***; ***War, Evil and the end of History***; ***Who Killed Daniel Pearl?***; and ***The Empire and the Five Kings***.

His documentaries include ***Peshmerga***, ***The Battle of Mosul***, ***The Oath of Tobruk and Bosna!***; most of them have been selected in the Cannes Film Festival.

Lévy writes a weekly column for the French magazine **Le Point** which is translated into various languages and published in various European and American outlets.

He is co-founder of the antiracist group **SOS Racisme** and has served on diplomatic missions for the French government.

In February 2014, the philosopher was in Kiev during the Maïdan Revolution, actively promoting the pro-European events. In February 2015, he performed his play ***Hotel Europa*** at the Kiev opera house on the first anniversary of the Euromaidan's toppling of the pro-Russian government of Victor Yanukovich and in various other cities (London, Spoleto, Odessa, Lviv, New York...)

The rise of populism which promises to assault the campaign of the European elections in 2019 convinced Bernard-Henri Lévy to set out on the road again with a new play : ***Looking for Europe***.

LOOKING FOR EUROPE

DATES

2019 TOUR

5 March	MILAN	Italy	Teatro Parenti
7 March	BRUSSELS	Belgium	Public Theatre
13 March	AMSTERDAM	Netherlands	Koninklijk Theater Carre
15 March	GENEVA	Switzerland	Théâtre du Léman
16 March	LAUSANNE	Switzerland	Métropole
18 March	VIENNA	Austria	Akzent Theater
25 March	BARCELONA	Spain	Coliseum
26 March	MADRID	Spain	Teatro Nuevo Apolo
28 March	KIEV	Ukraine	October Palace
1 April	ATHENS	Greece	Pallas
6 April	TIRANA	Albania	Orthodox Cultural Center
12 April	GDANSK	Poland	European Center for Solidarity
15 April	BERLIN	Germany	Humboldt Hall
24 April	ROME	Italy	Sala Umberto
26 April	PRAGUE	Czech Rep.	Archa Theater
28 April	COPENHAGEN	Denmark	Royal Theater - To be confirmed
1 May	DUBLIN	Ireland	Trinity College - To be confirmed
6 May	LISBON	Portugal	Tivoli
13 May	BUCCAREST	Romania	Teatrul National - To be confirmed
15 May	STOCKHOLM	Sweden	Oscars Teatern
17 May	VILNIUS	Lithuania	Russian Drama Theater
20 May	PARIS	France	Théâtre Antoine



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