ANNUAL HARTNACK LECTURE 2026

SOPHIE LOIDOLT

TU DARMSTADT



REALITY AS A POLITICAL CATEGORY: HANNAH ARENDT ON TRUTH AND LYING IN POLITICS

For Hannah Arendt, reality is not just a philosophical puzzle but a central and irreducibly political category. In her lecture, Sophie Loidolt (TU Darmstadt) traces Arendt's lifelong concern with what she calls "worldlessness" — the loss of a shared, common world — from her early writings on Augustin, love and community to her account of totalitarianism, which she sees as an assault on plurality itself: the fact that the same world appears differently to different people, and that this very difference is what makes it real. Reality, on this view, is neither simply objective nor merely subjective, but something we bring into being together, through speech and action. The final part turns to "Truth and Politics," exploring the mutual threat between systematic lying and truth's own absolutist claims, and relates this to today's post-truth debates.

About the Hartnack lecture

On the occasion of his 90th birthday, the Annual Justus Hartnack Lecture was inaugurated in gratitude to his service, and to help preserve the international outlook that Hartnack gave to the Aarhus Philosophy Department from its beginning. The honour of giving the Annual Hartnack Lecture is awarded to an internationally recognized and distinguished researcher, who has made outstanding contributions in philosophy.

Friday, 4 December 13:15-15:00
Auditorium 1, Tåsingegade 3 (1441-012)
Open to all and followed by a reception.