

## Virtual Picnic – Celebrating Kotzebue on the occasion of his 260th Anniversary

3 May 2021, online event

On the 3rd May 1761 August von Kotzebue was born in the so-called 'Gelbes Schloss' (Yellow Palace) in Weimar. He was the third child of Anna Christine Kotzebue (née Krüger), who, after the early death of her husband Levin Carl Christian Kotzebue, became the long-lived matriarch of the 'Kotzebue clan' maintaining her base in Weimar. Kotzebue, though, left Germany for the Russian Empire in 1781. At the turn of the 19 Century, he rose to become a world-renowned writer and a controversial public figure.

On the occasion of August von Kotzebue's 260th Anniversary a festive event will take place online on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 2021 starting at 17h CET (Berlin & Paris; 18h in St. Petersburg & Moscow; 18h in Tallinn; 16h in London; 11 am in New York & Washington DC; 8 am in Los Angeles & Vancouver; midnight in Sendai). The Kotzebue Picnic aims to bring artists, curators, and academics together in order to celebrate his birthday and to catch up with the flourishing global Kotzebue community.

Take your part in the Kotzebue Picnic by providing your share of the conversation, the entertainment, and the intellectual refreshment, virtually reinvigorating this fashionable form of sociability much loved in the Kotzebue era.

Bring your own delicacies to celebrate the multifaceted figure of World Literature, the

playwright & actor,  
novelist & songwriter,  
editor & journalist,  
travel writer & historian,  
diplomat & civil servant,  
agriculturist & gardener,  
abolitionist & serf owner,  
womanizer & family man,  
son, sibling, husband, and father  
August von Kotzebue.

The variety of Picnic contributions can include readings, performances, or talks. It is your choice.

We would very much welcome any kind of short artistic or academic contributions based on or related to texts, plays, or songs written by Kotzebue. Contributions pertaining to any afterlife of his works, such as translations into various languages or media would be great too.

Bearing in mind the spirit of sociability, why not present a short talk shedding new light on some aspects of Kotzebue's life or writings. Or contribute to the picnic conversation by revealing why you are obsessed with Kotzebue, or what you are planning to write or perform next.

There will be two modes in which you can share your picnic dishes with everyone: live and pre-recorded.

Readings, performances, and talks of up to 5 minutes would likely be best presented (and consumed) live during the virtual event.

It would be delightful to have pre-recorded contributions of up to 15 minutes. The video 'picnic pieces' will be presented online on YouTube, the audio podcasts on the SoundCloud.

Written contributions of up to 600 words to will be published online on the event's website.

Considering the nature of Kotzebue's work & the academic research done on him, German and English will be probably the most agreeable languages to be used during the Picnic. Nevertheless the event is open to contributions in any other languages. Just get in touch with the Picnic's host.

Let us know what kind of picnic contribution you'll be happy to share by writing an email to [picnic@kotzebue-international.org](mailto:picnic@kotzebue-international.org) (in German, English, or Russian; if at all possible by the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021).

With your help we hope to create a suitable and entertaining mix in the spirit of Kotzebue for the Picnic on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021. We will collect und refresh the list of themes and topics submitted in order to provide an up to date overview over the Picnic programme on the event's homepage.

The event is free and open to everyone.

Come to the Kotzebue Picnic if you are curious about or interested in getting to know more about this celebrated figure of the Romantic Period. Just book a place via Eventbrite to be provided with a Zoom link and details of how to join the online forum.

We hope you can join us for this exciting event!

#### **Picnic Hosts**

*Anna Ananieva, Julia Bohnengel, Denis Sdvižkov*

#### **Overview & Dates:**

20 April 2021: Picnic Contribution Deadline via email at: [picnic@kotzebue-international.org](mailto:picnic@kotzebue-international.org)

2 May 2021, 24h CET: Registration Deadline via Eventbrite

3 May 2021, 17h CET (Berlin & Paris; 18h in Tallinn, St. Petersburg & Moscow; 16h in London; 11 am in New York & Washington DC; 8 am in Los Angeles & Vancouver; midnight in Sendai): Virtual Picnic – Celebrating Kotzebue on the occasion of his 260<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**Website:** [www.kotzebue-international.org](http://www.kotzebue-international.org)

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