



## 49th International Ecumenical Seminar

July 1 - 8, 2015, Strasbourg, France

### *Ecumenism in the Arts*

#### **Dates**

From July 1 (arrival and evening reception) to  
July 8 (departure after breakfast), 2015, in  
Strasbourg, France

#### **Registration and Information**

Registration until April 15, 2015

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The ecumenical movement seeks the visible unity of divided Christians. The visibility and tangibility of the unity and communion of Christians and the churches have many different dimensions and aspects. This multiplicity needs to be taken up anew and given fresh attention. In this regard, the arts have a particular role to play. The Christian faith has been expressed since its earliest beginnings in works of art. These works cross the boundaries between the churches. Therefore it is valuable to ask whether and how art can be helpful in seeing and experiencing the unity of Christians.

What does it mean that Protestant hymns can be found in Catholic hymnals and Catholic hymns in Protestant ones? In the music of Johann Sebastian Bach the Lutheran understanding of the gospel takes melodious form, and yet many Catholics treasure his music as well. Gospel music and praise songs of charismatic and Pentecostal origin are widely spread and extremely popular. Icons are an essential expression of Orthodox Christian faith that have met with warm appreciation among Western Christians in recent years. Also in modern painting and visual art Christian themes appear. Magnificent church buildings—like the Strasbourg cathedral—with lavish exteriors incorporating theological programs are valued not only by their own members. Christian

authors are read across confessional boundaries. Even the cinema is a place where Christian motifs can be recognized.



We will investigate examples of this kind of border-crossing artwork and their ecumenical

significance. Thus also the foundational themes of ecumenism will be taken up, such as unity and diversity, the connection between the believed, hidden, and visible church, and the perception, experience, and recognition of other Christians and other churches.

The Seminar is not restricted to theological debates, though. Just as important is the personal conversation among participants, their sharing of ecumenical and confessional experiences, their questions and attention. Precisely because the participants come from many different churches and nations is this exchange so especially exciting and illuminating. Therefore,

plenty of time is offered in the plenary and working groups for such discussion. Not planned in advance but for this reason all the more important are the many conversations that take place over superb French food in the dining hall or over a glass of wine in one of the restaurants of the old medieval city of Strasbourg.



### *Languages*

English and German are the main languages of the Seminar. Lectures and discussions will be simultaneously translated into and out of these languages. Participants may also express themselves in French in the plenary discussions.

### *Costs*

The charge for the seminar, including full pension (i.e., room and meals) in a seminary dormitory (single rooms) is € 700. Financial support is often provided by churches or other institutions, so participants are encouraged to apply to their appropriate church offices.

As last year, a smaller part of this amount will be used to assist some participants from Eastern Europe, the South and from Latin America, persons who likely would not be able to participate without our help.