

# "This Urge for the Truth"

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A pandemic turned the whole world upside down. Millions of people died, and their relatives and friends have had to cope with suffering and death. Nobody could avoid, at least for one moment, some radical questions: Why do we have to suffer and die? What is the meaning of all of this? Is there nothing I can do? What can I rely on? Feeling ill at ease, we moved on to less unsettling questions: Is COVID really dangerous? Are masks necessary? Should vaccinations be mandatory? For many of us, our political affiliations provided "answers" to these questions, inviting us to follow a party line rather than search for the truth.

This same dynamic, fueled by the media and online communities we choose to trust, happens all the time in our public life: whether the election was fair or stolen; whether a demonstration was a protest or a riot; whether racism is systemic; whether gender is related to biological sex; whether climate change is real. It seems we live in different worlds, each with its own "truths" that often spare us the hard work of seeking *the* truth. But at what price?

Reality no longer surprises us. It is twisted to fit our interpretations, and its meaning is purely subjective. Its impact does not open questions which would set us on a journey and, after a while, even the most tragic events do not change our minds. As a result, we feel both trapped in our certitudes and afraid of the unexpected. We are left dissatisfied, with the nagging feeling that we are losing ourselves. And yet, a subtle, relentless desire for what is true remains.

**Can we ever know what is real and who is trustworthy? Why does truth matter?  
And how can we reach it?**

"One day the wanderer slammed a door shut behind him, came to a halt, and wept.  
Then he said: 'This penchant and urge for what is true, real, non-apparent, certain—how I hate it!'"

~Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Joyous Science*

Join us February 18-20, 2022, for a weekend of public discussions, exhibits, and live performances, to encounter people who face these questions head-on.

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