

**Conference 'Entangled Humanism'**  
**Rethinking humanity in the face of social and ecological concerns**

***With William Connolly***

**October 7-8, 2019**

Palace of the Academies, Brussels, Belgium

<http://www.entangledhumanism.com>

The Centre for Ethics and Humanism (VUB) is pleased to invite you to the international conference 'Entangled Humanism' with the American political philosopher *William Connolly*. The conference will be sponsored and hosted by the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts.

In addressing urgent social problems such as discrimination, violent conflicts and climate change, William Connolly makes a plea for 'deep pluralism.' Deep pluralism is based on new relationships that people develop when they try to realize shared goals. Groups with diverging worldviews may find each other for the sake of addressing a common cause which is relevant to all, supported by a spiritual, but not necessarily religious, affinity that transcends their differences. In Connolly's view, pluralism is by no means the same as relativism: it is important to stand up for what you believe in, but this can coexist with 'agonistic respect' for the other. Even when our convictions and beliefs clash, we need not be enemies.

His view on pluralism doesn't restrict itself to relations between people. In his book *Facing the Planetary: Entangled humanism and the politics of swarming* (2017) Connolly argues that we need new ways of thinking about how humans relate to other forms of being. We live in a continuously changing world, and through complex processes new issues emerge, which were previously impossible to predict. How do we cope with the complexities of the creative forces that are at work on different levels in our world, ranging from a micro level of e.g. bacteria to a macro level of climate patterns? How can we deal with the constructive and destructive potentials of these forces? Connolly advocates an 'entangled humanism' that takes the inextricable interdependency of all forms of being into account, and an interdisciplinarity that disrupts the dividing lines between humanities and sciences.

During this two-day conference we enter into dialogue with William Connolly in two ways:

- 1) theoretical explorations of his thoughts from ethical, political-philosophical and humanistic perspectives;
- 2) practical explorations of how 'entangled humanism' can be realized in humanistic practices.

Costs: €50 for one-day attendance, €75 for two-day attendance, free for students.

Deadline for registration: **October 1st, 2019.**

Organizers: Dr. Marc Van den Bossche (VUB); Dr. Hans Alma (VUB, coordinator); Dr. Yoni Van Den Eede (VUB); Dr. Caroline Suransky (University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht); Dr. Gert Verschraegen (Antwerp University).