

Press Release

6 December 2022

Autumn General Assembly 2022 of the Akademie der Künste – Solidarity with the Last Generation

The 59th General Assembly of the Akademie der Künste took place in Berlin from 2 to 4 December 2022. On the agenda were meetings of the sections Visual Arts, Architecture, Music, Literature, Performing Arts as well as Film and Media Arts. In two plenary sessions, new members and fellows were welcomed and pressing cultural and social issues were discussed.

Guest speaker in the plenary session was the Israeli-German Director of the Anne Frank Educational Center, Prof. Meron Mendel. He gave a talk on the subject: “The Blank Void of Antisemitism? Post-colonial Critique vs. German Culture of Remembrance Using the Example of the Documenta Debate”.

The other main topic of discussion was the impending climate catastrophe and the public response to the “Last Generation” movement. The Akademie der Künste is concerned about the disproportionate criminalisation of the activists in media and politics. This pushes the actual issue, namely man-made global warming, into the background. The majority of members declared their solidarity with the Last Generation, acknowledging that while their activities are controversial, their environmental protection agenda must be advanced.

Participants in the General Assembly included Carola Bauckholt, Volker Braun, Candice Breitz, Edith Clever, Arnold Dreyblatt, Thomas Flierl, Aris Fioretos, Fritz Frenkler, Thomas Heise, Kerstin Hensel, Nele Hertling, Thomas Lehr, Jeanine Meerapfel, Bjørn Melhus, Helke Misselwitz, HG Merz, Ulrich Peltzer, Monika Rinck, Kathrin Röggla, Karin Sander, Iris ter Schiphorst, Ingo Schulze, Klaus Staeck, Matthias Sauerbruch, Hito Steyerl, Uwe Timm, Jutta Wachowiak, Cécile Wajsbrot.

On the evening of Saturday 3 December, a public discussion event was held: The **Third Berlin Encounter** addressed current debates, catastrophes and the many wars and conflicts taking place around the world and in Europe. This event picks up on the Akademie der Künste’s “Berliner Begegnungen zur Friedensförderung”, which took place in the early 1980s. Akademie members and their guests – including Friedrich Dieckmann, Bjørn Melhus, Steffen Mensching, Iris ter Schiphorst, Kathrin Schmidt, Ingo Schulze, Gustav Seibt, Aleš Šteger, Andres Veiel and many others – shared their thoughts and questions about the times. The aim of the event was to promote dialogue in what is often an entrenched and polarised climate – by listening without prejudice, and addressing and tolerating

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opposing positions and contradictions. Here too, discussion revolved around the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and calls for an effective climate policy.

The Akademie der Künste currently has 426 members. Its archives include over 1200 artists' bequests. Since 2015, filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel has been President of the Akademie. In autumn of 2021, she was elected for an additional three years. The writer Kathrin Röggla is Vice President.

The next General Assembly will be held in May 2023.

Further information on the members of the Akademie der Künste is available [here](#).

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