

Press- and Public Relations

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Prelude to the Peter Weiss Year, 2016 Long Night at the Akademie der Künste on 30 April

Hanseatenweg, begins at 8 pm

"I sincerely hope that Peter Weiss will never become a classic, but will be remembered as an artist who always understood the words 'culture' and 'revolution', 'art' and 'great universal change' to be moving closer together, because he was one of the last who still believed in the pioneering role of art." Walter Jens, formerly president of the Akademie der Künste, made this remark in 1991, during his speech at the opening of the academy's Peter Weiss exhibition.

Nevertheless, how should we categorise the work of Peter Weiss today, 25 years later? Has his work become a part of history in the interim, and therefore also made Peter Weiss into a classic by default? Or does his aesthetic, uniquely intertwined like no other form of art and politics, perhaps provide a new point of departure for artistic achievements *especially now*?

Through his credo "that art must have the strength to change life", Peter Weiss aligned himself with political responsibility for art and always combined these political expectations with his own highly artistic and avant-garde aesthetic. Thus, through works such as *Marat/Sade* (1964), *Die Ermittlung* (*The Investigation*, 1965) and *Viet Nam Diskurs* (*Discourse on Vietnam*, 1968), he became one of the most important representatives of documentary theatre, and through his three-volume magnum opus *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands* (*The Aesthetics of Resistance*, 1975-81) he substantially contributed to literary debates at universities and in the art press.

To launch the Peter Weiss Year – 8 November 2016 marks what would have been his 100th birthday – a "Long Night" event will take place this coming Saturday at the Akademie der Künste. The special event focuses on an author, who had close ties with both halves of the Akademie der Künste since the 1960s, in the West (a member since 1965) and the East (since 1966), and whose estate has been part of the academy archives since 1986. Readings, discussions and film clips will recall an artist, who was not only equally at home in the genres of the visual arts, film, theatre and literature, but throughout whose entire oeuvre "word, image, music, and cinematic motion are inseparably" interwoven with one another (Peter Weiss). A rare showing of a self-portrait – recently acquired for the academy's art collection – is on view, and an exhibition shown in display cases provides insights into manuscripts and documents from Weiss' estate.

Members of the Akademie der Künste are participating in the extensive programme, including Volker Braun, Jochen Gerz, Jeanine Meerapfel, Ulrich Peltzer, Kathrin Röggla, Ingo Schulze and Hanns Zischler, as well as Gunilla Palmstierna-Weiss, Hans-Werner Kroesinger, Jörg Magenau and Florian Wüst. Music by Conny Bauer and Floros Floridis.

The Peter Weiss Night concludes the Akademie der Künste's 47th Members' General Meeting, held in Berlin on 29–30 April under the direction of Jeanine Meerapfel, president, and Kathrin Röggla, vice president.

Special Event Information: Peter Weiss Night

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg 10, 10557 Berlin
 Saturday, 30 April 2016, 8 pm, admission € 12/8

Press tickets: presse@adk.de, Tel. +49 (0)30 20057-1514

Detailed programme: www.adk.de