

Press Release

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Publication of *SINN UND FORM* is prohibited. An attack on literature

The District Court of Berlin has temporarily prohibited the Akademie der Künste from continuing to publish the literary magazine *SINN UND FORM*. The background is an antitrust lawsuit brought by the magazine *Lettre Internationale* and its publisher Frank Berberich, who accuses *SINN UND FORM* of being a “state magazine”. The District Court bases its ruling on purely formal grounds, which can be remedied by the Akademie der Künste itself.

The incident as a whole is unprecedented in the history of German literary and cultural journals. As a reaction to state funding being withheld from *Lettre Internationale* during the pandemic, its publisher launched an attack on the internationally renowned journal *SINN UND FORM*. And this despite the fact that the Akademie der Künste, together with other magazines, had offered to support *Lettre Internationale* out of solidarity. The implications of this attack extend well beyond the publication of *SINN UND FORM*.

Jeanine Meerapfel, President of the Akademie der Künste, has expressed shock at this attack. “The mission of the Akademie is to promote the arts and to represent the cause of art within society at large. The publication of this renowned journal is an integral part of this mission. Without this journal, the literary landscape would be a different one, a poorer one. The threat to independent editorial cultural magazines is also a threat to the democratic public sphere.”

SINN UND FORM has been published since 1949 – since 1950 by the Akademie der Künste – and has also played a major role in the artistic debates that have taken place within the artists’ society.

The advisory board of *SINN UND FORM*, which includes Michael Krüger, Cécile Wajsbrot and Ingo Schulze, released the following statement: The attack by *Lettre Internationale* “is directed against the genre as such, as other magazines are the targets of lawsuits as well. It is also an attack on the diversity of literary life, which does not follow the logic of market economics, but relies instead on private and public participation. The pretext for the attack by *Lettre Internationale* is the elimination of a ‘state magazine’. The outcome would be an increasing erosion of cultural exchange and democratic coexistence – something that is particularly important during times like these.” The full statement, as well as the list of the many first signatories, can be found at [here](#).

Press and
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