

## Press Release

14 November 2023

### **Akademie der Künste Autumn General Assembly 2023: Solidarity with Israel – Combating antisemitism**

The **61st General Assembly of the Akademie der Künste** took place in Berlin from 10 to 12 November 2023. The agenda included work-related discussions within the sections Visual Arts, Architecture, Music, Literature, Performing Arts, and Film and Media Arts. Two plenary sessions were held to welcome new members and fellows and to discuss urgent cultural and sociopolitical issues.

Akademie President Jeanine Meerapfel's address reflected on the war in the Middle East and was received with wide approval by the members (a copy of her speech is available here and as a pdf attachment).

The Akademie der Künste had already condemned Hamas's acts of aggression against Israel in a public statement issued on 9 October 2023 and called for a ban on any support for Hamas within Germany. In her speech, Jeanine Meerapfel said: "It is unacceptable that Jews in Germany today are once again afraid to show themselves in public. It is unacceptable that their homes in Germany are once again being marked with a Star of David. It is unacceptable that Hamas's brutal attacks on Israel are being cheered on the streets of Germany."

She also discussed the way in which society is being constantly bombarded by the media: the online world is a battlefield in which there are no borders and no protection. The horrific videos recorded by Hamas on 7 October are also weapons whose intention is to spread fear and terror.

Thomas Krüger, President of the Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb), spoke as a guest in the plenary session. He gave a keynote speech entitled "Toxic Narratives and the Success of Right-Wing Populists". His remarks centred on ways of analysing and dealing with the AfD and its anti-immigrant discourse.

The list of those participating in the members' General Assembly included Carola Bauckholt, Edith Clever, Arnold Dreyblatt, Aris Fioretos, Fritz Frenkler, Christian Grashof, Erika and Ulrich Gregor, Thomas Heise, Kerstin Hensel, Nele Hertling, Ulrich Khuon, Michael Krüger, Helke Misselwitz, HG Merz, Elfi Mikesch, Ulrike Ottinger, Rosa von Praunheim, Monika Rinck, Karin Sander, Iris ter Schiphorst, Kathrin Schmidt, Ingo Schulze, Helke Sander, Matthias Sauerbruch, Lutz Seiler, Aleš Šteger, Jutta Wachowiak and Cécile Wajsbrot.

On the evening of Saturday, 11 November, a public event devised by Akademie members took place on Hanseatenweg: "Poems about Love at This Time." Prior to the event, Kerstin Hensel, Dagmara Kraus, Angela Krauß, Ursula Krechel, Michael

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Krüger, Monika Rinck and Aleš Šteger, who are all members of the Literature Section, made a selection of poems about love – both their own and works by other poets, including Bertolt Brecht, Michael Donhauser, Günter Grass, Peter Hacks, Karl Mickel and Tomaž Šalamun.

Singer Anna Clementi and guitarist Simon Ganly performed music by current and past members of the Academy with compositions by Georges Aperghis, Younghi Pagh-Paan, Paul Dessau and Dieter Schnebel.

The Akademie der Künste currently has 413 members. Its archives include over 1,200 artist's estates. Filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel has been President of the Akademie der Künste since 2015 and her position was confirmed for another three years in autumn 2021. Writer Kathrin Röggla is Vice President.

The next Members' General Assembly will take place in May 2024.

You can find out more about the members of the Akademie at [www.adk.de/en/academy/members/](http://www.adk.de/en/academy/members/)

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