

Press Release

17 Juni 2019

20 Years of the Gesellschaft der Freunde der Akademie der Künste e.V.

Under the motto "Friendship! For 20 years already", the Gesellschaft der Freunde der Akademie der Künste (Society of the Friends of the Akademie der Künste) is celebrating its anniversary. On 19 June, an evening event with invited guests will be held at the Akademie der Künste at Pariser Platz, where Minister of State Prof. Monika Grütters will give the commemorative address. The programme featuring Akademie members Edith Clever, Christian Grashof, Corinna Harfouch and Wolfram Koch was put together by Jürgen Flimm and the Performing Arts Section of the Akademie der Künste. Bernd J. Wieczorek and Klaus Mangold, chairman and founding director of the Gesellschaft der Freunde, and Jeanine Meerapfel, President of the Akademie der Künste, will also speak.

Since the Society of Friends was founded in 1999, it has helped to fund numerous artistic productions by the Akademie der Künste, publications, acquisitions and events by the Archives of the Akademie der Künste.

The total amount of support provided to date comes to more than 2.6 million euros. One of the first major projects focused on the new building at Pariser Platz: in 2005, the opening of the building with the then Federal President Köhler and Chancellor Schröder and the inaugural exhibition were generously co-funded. Since then, the Society of Friends has been involved in numerous other exhibitions and programme focal points by the Akademie, including those on Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht, George Grosz, Max Frisch, Arno Schmidt, Walter Kempowski, John Cage, Richard Wagner, the future of the city and flight and exile. Up-and-coming artists from the Junge Akademie are supported with pilot funding and the Akademie's programme for children and youths has been significantly expanded. Another outstanding service was its sponsorship of the acquisition of building plans by Hans Scharoun and sketch books by George Grosz.

In addition to financial resources, the Society of Friends also acts as a dedicated network on behalf of the institution and, through its work, promotes dialogue and interaction between art and society.

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the Society of Friends of the Akademie will make an anniversary donation in addition to its regular annual funding. This has made possible a publication on the *Bilderkeller* (Picture Cellar), which re-opened to the public for the first time since its restoration. With wall paintings by former master students of the Akademie der Künste dating from 1957 and 1958, the *Bilderkeller* is an impressive testament to the history of the Akademie and its building at Pariser Platz as well as to the art of the GDR.

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