

THE BERLIN DECLARATION OF THE MANY

Art creates spaces for change

As creators of arts and culture in Germany we do not stand above things. Rather we have both feet firmly on the ground – the very ground upon which one of the worst state crimes against humanity was committed. This country has seen art vilified as degenerate and culture being abused for purpose of propaganda. Millions of people were murdered or driven into exile, amongst them many artists.

Today we see arts and culture as well as their venues, i.e. museums, theatres, galleries, clubs and urban places as open spaces belonging to many. We view our society as a plural gathering - an encounter of different interests that find each other in the spaces between. Democracy needs to be renegotiated daily – but always on the premise that it concerns us all, every single one of us, as beings of multiple possibilities!

By attacking cultural institutions as agents of this societal vision, right-wing populism stands in hostile opposition to the art of the many. Right-wing groups and parties frequently disrupt events, aim to determine repertoires, polemicise against the freedom of art and above all are working on the re-nationalisation of culture. Their disrespectful reaction to people seeking refuge, to dedicated artists and dissidents, clearly shows how they plan to deal with our society should a shift of power in their favour become reality.

We, the supporters of Berlin theatres, art galleries, museums and cultural spaces and their associates reject these attempts with a clear position:

- The cultural institutions signing this declaration will lead an open and critical dialogue that creates awareness in regards to right-wing strategies. The Institutions engage in these dialogues with all participants as well as the public under the premise that their institutions have a commitment to advancing our society democratically.
- All signatories commit themselves to not providing a platform for racist-nationalist propaganda.
- We reject the illegitimate attempts made by right-wing nationalists to exploit art and cultural events for their own purposes.
- We unite in solidarity with people who, in the light of right-wing politics, are further marginalised within our society.

Solidarity over privilege. It's about all of us. Freedom for the Arts!

Declaration of the Many – Our Commitment

1. Signatories of this declaration are exclusively cultural institutions, galleries, theatres, museums and their associates.
2. With their signatures, the leadership or leadership team agrees to circulating the declaration within their organisation, promoting discussion with employees, company members, curators, audiences and the public.
3. The declaration will be published on web pages, in programmes, as announcements, in foyers, etc.
4. All cultural institutions supporting the declaration will be mentioned on the homepage of the Association of the Many, Die Vielen e.V. at: www.dievielen.de. Linking is requested.
5. The golden rescue blanket, the symbol of the Association of the Many, Die Vielen e.V., shall be used in support for the declaration and as far as the corporate design allows. Be it as an actual flag, a layout background, as an icon, in form of gold lettering, etc. (Toolkit will be provided.)
6. The signatories will organise events, talks and activities that inform and foster dialogue in regard to the four positions as stated in the declaration. Events and dates will be announced on the website: www.dievielen.de
7. In conjunction with individual public relation work and a central press conference, the declaration and the campaign will be published on a key date: the 9th November, 2018. Activities to mark the campaign launch, such as hoisting the golden rescue blanket at cultural institutes, initial information events, readings etc. will be realised independently and coordinated together.
8. The campaign launch for the Declaration of the Many is regional by nature and will spread through cultural institutions as “the Hamburg, NRW or Dresden Declaration” – to name but a few.
9. Once the institutions have signed and the declaration is launched (for Berlin on the 9th of November 2018) individuals and artists groups are invited to declare their support and sign by sending an email to: unterstuetzung@dievielen.de.
(Cultural institutions can still become signatories after the 9th November and join the declaration by sending an email to erklaerung@dievielen.de)
10. The institutions that have signed the declaration will participate in country wide campaigns comprising events, dialogue, forums. Further, they will mobilise for the “Glittering Arts and Culture Demonstration on the 18th of May 2019. - Solidarity over privilege. It’s about all of us. Freedom for the Arts!”
11. All signatories commit to showing their solidarity with those cultural institutions and artists targeted by smear campaigns and vilification.

DIE VIELEN e.V. The Association of the Many

DIE VIELEN e.V. is a registered, not-for-profit association founded in June 2017.

Its aim and charitable purpose is the promotion of an international mind set, tolerance in all areas concerning culture and public education.

The following statements are central to our work:

The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, aims to strengthen opportunities for communication and action amongst artists, ensembles and agents within the performing arts and the fine arts.

This is particularly pertinent to artists who understand theatre and art as a means of participation in creating a society made up of people of every skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, diverse needs and abilities, of every faith or non-faith and based on their equality.

The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, shows solidarity for all who work in the arts or culture, including the institutions to which they are attached, and who are under attack or whose legitimacy is being questioned by right-wing populists and far-right positions.

The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, promotes art that moves beyond its own realm to pioneer an equal and open society.

The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, supports living together with open borders – inwards as well as outwards. It stands for togetherness that is courageous and generous.

The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, organises events and happenings that reject hate. It initiates controversial debates within the theatre and art world.

The Association of the Many, DIE VIELEN, acts as a supportive and active network and offers a networking platform for artists as well as art and cultural institutions.

WE ARE MANY – EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US