

Press Release

Berlin, July 19, 2023

A New Start for the Team at Stiftung Exilmuseum Berlin

Stiftung Exilmuseum Berlin announces that the initiator of the project Bernd Schultz has left the executive board for age reasons. Ruth Ur has also left the board.

Kader Konuk and Heike Catherina Mertens have been named new board members. After the unexpected death of our founding director Christoph Stözl, our curator Cornelia Vossen has been appointed artistic director.

André Schmitz, chair of the executive board, Stiftung Exilmuseum:

“Without Bernd Schultz, the Exilmuseum project would not exist. We would like to thank him for his outstanding initiative and untiring commitment. The foundation has been laid, and we will do everything to ensure that the project will be completed as he and Christoph Stözl intended.

Ruth Ur had been a member of the board since the foundation was established in 2018. We would also like to thank her for her productive contribution and the international perspective she contributed to the project.

I look forward to continuing my close cooperation over the coming years with Cornelia Vossen, who was already key in planning the conception of Exilmuseum along with Christoph Stözl.

Heike Catherina Mertens, as an experienced foundation manager, will contribute her practical expertise in the realm of memorial culture and current debates in society. With her scholarly profile, Kader Konuk will help to open Exilmuseum towards issues pertaining to exile in the present. I am very happy we were able to gain these renowned experts for our project. With this new verve, we will succeed in convincing the federal government to contribute to this pioneering project.”

Bernd Schultz provided the initial funding for the project by auctioning his collection of drawings and prints in 2018. With his infectious enthusiasm, he was able to gain many supporters for the initiative. With his help, we were able to obtain pledges to donate 20 million euros.

Heike Catherina Mertens is a culture and foundation manager and until February 2023 was a member of the board of directors of Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung. Before that, from 2018 to 2022, she served as director of Los Angeles’ Villa Aurora and Thomas Mann House, which are dedicated to remembering the German artists living in Californian exile during the Nazi dictatorship and are conceived as sites of debate for democracy and against racism. During her term as member of the board of the Schering Stiftung from 2007 to 2018, the trained art historian focused on promoting a dialogue between art and science.



Kader Konuk teaches Turkish literature and cultural studies at Universität Duisburg-Essen and has now been named professor for German literature at TU Dortmund. In her research, she studies discourses, cultural practices, and disciplinary formations that are shaped by migration and exile. Her special interest focuses on the German-Jewish exile from 1933–45 and the modernization of the humanities in Turkey. In 2017, she co-founded the Academy in Exile, a fellowship program that until now has provided 78 endangered scholars from fifteen different countries fellowships to return to their research in Germany.

Cornelia Vossen is a trained art historian and has been Exilmuseum's curator since the very beginning. After the death of our founding director Christoph Stölzl, the curator he appointed has been named artistic director. In Vossen's own words:

"I began working with Christoph Stölzl before the Exilmuseum project and know rather precisely what his intentions were. Our concept for the planned permanent exhibition at Exilmuseum is already quite advanced and I look forward to continuing to develop these plans as we both envisioned. At the exhibition space at Werkstatt Exilmuseum, you can learn about our plans and participate in the event series that was conceived jointly with Christoph Stölzl. We will actively commemorate him in our work."

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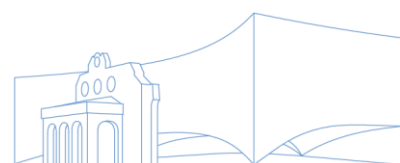
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