

Press Release

3 July 2024

Academy Discussion: On the Question of the Cultural Reutilisation of the Galeries Lafayette Department Store in Berlin

Anh-Linh Ngo in conversation with Joe Chialo, Dominique Alba, Volker Heller, Regine Keller, Katharina Schultens

Introduction: Manos Tsangaris and Anh-Linh Ngo

Monday, 15 July 2024, from 7 pm, Pariser Platz

The event focuses on the repurposing of the Galeries Lafayette as the new home of the Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, the largest public library in Germany. Initiated by Berlin's Senator for Culture, Joe Chialo, the discussion on the future use of the department store designed by Jean Nouvel presents an opportunity to take advantage of the crisis in city centres and to channel changing consumer and user behaviour into a productive transformation of public space. At the same time, developing the existing building would be important in terms of climate policy, as it would reduce the CO₂ emissions involved in moving the library to a new building, for which plans are anyway in place. The positive impact of this is amplified by the idea that has recently been put forward of housing the State Library in the building as well, since it is in need of a home while its existing premises are refurbished over the next 15 years.

Manos Tsangaris, President of the Akademie, introduces the evening in dialogue with Vice-President Anh-Linh Ngo, who then invites the participants to the podium to engage in one-on-one discussions. Architect Dominique Alba, Director of Ateliers Jean Nouvel, conveys a message of greeting from Jean Nouvel and takes an inside at the building's architectural possibilities. Senator for Culture Joe Chialo and ZLB Director General Volker Heller debate the cultural policy implications. Regine Keller, urban planner and Deputy Director of the Architecture Section at the Akademie der Künste, talks about the revitalisation of public space. Poet Katharina Schultens, Director of the Haus für Poesie and a member of the Akademie, shows how libraries serve as important loci of cultural education. The Akademie discussion, which brings together multiple perspectives including literary and poetic interventions, is conceived of as a format for reflecting together on the future of urban society.

The Architecture Section at the Akademie der Künste published an opinion on this topic back in early April; see [Press Release from 5 April 2024](#).

Manos Tsangaris and Anh-Linh Ngo, as President and Vice-President, will continue the established event series Akademie Discussions.

Press and Public Relations

Pariser Platz 4
10117 Berlin
T 030 200 57-15 14
F 030 200 57-15 08
presse@adk.de
www.adk.de

Introduction:

Manos Tsangaris, President of the Akademie der Künste and composer

Anh-Linh Ngo, Vice-President of the Akademie der Künste and architectural journalist and commentator

Anh-Linh Ngo in conversation with:

Joe Chialo, Senator for Culture and Social Cohesion

Dominique Alba, Director of Ateliers Jean Nouvel

Volker Heller, Chair of the Board and Director General of Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin (ZLB)

Regine Keller, landscape architect, urban planner and Deputy Director of the Architecture Section at the Akademie der Künste

Katharina Schultens, writer, Director of the Haus für Poesie, member of the Literature Section at the Akademie der Künste

Event details

Academy Discussions: On the Question of the Cultural Reutilisation of the Galeries Lafayette Department Store in Berlin

Monday, 15 July 2024, 7 pm

Akademie der Künste, Pariser Platz 4, 10117 Berlin

Admission: €7.50/5, free for under-18s

Tickets: ticket@adk.de; tel.: 030 20057-1000

Press passes: presse@adk.de; tel.: 030 200 57-1514

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