

# Culture for everyone: Volkswagen hosts panel discussion in Berlin



PUBLISHED DEC 6, 2023  
BY [VOLKSWAGEN](#)

Engage. Culture for everyone“ - public symposium at the DRIVE. Volkswagen Group Forum in Berlin on December 7, 2023

- Culture, science, media and education experts share ideas for an inclusive access to the cultural world
- Volkswagen Group organizes event and underlines its long-standing and wide-ranging support for culture and the arts

Cultural education and cultural participation involving a broad audience represent the key topics of the panel discussion “Engage. Culture for everyone“, which is hosted by the Volkswagen Group in Berlin and opens for the public later today. In the symposium, representatives from museums, universities, media companies and the corporate world are going to discuss chances that link cultural experiences with the commitment to openness, inspiration and diversity.

A rich and far-reaching culture is one of the pillars of a free society as it spurs discourses, tolerance and progress. Initiatives and projects, which encourage a large audience to explore and examine creative works and ideas, become more and more vital to help culture to grow and advance. Based on latest research results and innovative use of communication channels, museums and their partners have started already with the development of new mediation formats to open culture and the arts for new audience groups. The panel discussion in Berlin is set to provide insights into the work at Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, research in the fields of cultural mediation and cultural management as well as into the use of digital communication. This exchange of knowhow presents guests with an interesting outlook on the further evolution of cultural participation and cultural education.

Among the speakers is Benita von Maltzahn, Director Cultural Engagement at Volkswagen Group and founder of the symposium:

As much as a many other German companies, we are convinced that a strong society is built upon a powerful culture. We work closely with cultural institutions and inventors of art projects to create programs that are easy accessible for all people and attract many generations. Our efforts paved the way for the Volkswagen Group ART4ALL initiative that we have launched five years ago and that we together with our partners continuously enhance. I am grateful that this symposiums allows us to listen to first-hand inputs referring cultural work, science and communication, which might sets frames for concepts that can further improve cultural participation for the largest possible audience.

The panel discussion “Engage. Culture for everyone” takes place at the DRIVE. Volkswagen Group Forum (Friedrichstrasse 84, 10117 Berlin) on December 7, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. Please note that places for guests are limited.

Speakers at the panel discussion:

Professor of Cultural Mediation and Cultural Management at the University of Hildesheim, head of the Master's degree program in Cultural Mediation and the Bachelor's degree program in Cultural Studies and Artistic Practice. Birgit Mandel is also a member of the supervisory board of Berlin Kulturprojekte GmbH and a member of the board of trustees of the Commerzbank Foundation, for which she developed the "ZukunftsGut" award for institutional cultural mediation, as well as a member of the board of trustees of the Allianz Foundation. In addition, she is a founding member of the Association for Cultural Management and conducts research at the touch points of cultural mediation, cultural education, audience development, cultural management and cultural policy by running visitor studies and public surveys.

Director of Hamburger Bahnhof - Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart in Berlin together with Sam Bardaouil since January 2022. Since 2009, Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath have collaborated with over 70 museums worldwide through their interdisciplinary curatorial platform Art Reoriented. Most recently, they were curators of the 16th Lyon Biennale in 2022 under the title "Manifesto of Fragility". At the Venice Biennale, they were curators of the French Pavilion in 2022, as well as the Pavilions of Lebanon in 2013 and the United Arab Emirates in

2019. In Berlin, they were associate curators at the Gropius Bau from 2017 to 2021, where they curated the exhibitions "Walking through Walls" (2019) and "Beirut and the Golden Sixties" (2022). Till Fellrath studied political science and economics and holds master's degrees from the University of St. Gallen and the London School of Economics. Until 2022, he was Professor of Design-Related Sciences at the Academy of Fine Arts in Nuremberg.

Managing Director of the NGO Neue deutsche Medienmacher\*innen (NdM) that fights for more diversity in journalism and against discrimination in the media world. NdM also advises on how to deal with disinformation and digital violence. A graduate in journalism studies, Elena Kountidou has worked for the European broadcaster Arte in a position where culture and media meet. She also worked for the German Federal Cultural Foundation in cooperation with the Haus der Kulturen der Welt and for the Konzerthaus Berlin. As a partner of interdisciplinary projects, she has developed mediation concepts in the digital space and has received numerous awards for her work.

Director Cultural Engagement at Volkswagen Group. Benita von Maltzahn is responsible for Volkswagen Group's cultural and social engagement activities. Her work focuses on strengthening initiatives that open up cultural education and social participation to as many people as possible. She initiated collaborations with international institutions and players in the arts and culture, that made Volkswagen an important supporter for a variety of formats which enabled a large audience to engage with creative ideas and works. Her work drove the establishment and expansion of long-standing partnerships with the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA/MoMA PS1), the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and the collaboration with the Salzburg Easter Festival as well as the development of the Music Tech symposia. The Volkswagen Group also began collaborating with the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao and renowned institutions in China and the Arab world, while the Group intensified its support for cultural projects at its company locations.

Lives in Berlin, studied education and art history in Vienna and completed a postgraduate course in communication at the Institute for Cultural Studies. Claudia Ehgartner worked for many years as a freelance art and cultural mediator and became a founding partner of the trafo.K office in 1999. From 2000 to 2007 she headed the art education department at Kunsthalle Wien and from 2007 to 2018 the

art education and visitor service department at mumok, Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien. From 2002 to 2006 she was a member of the core team that was responsible for the "ecm" course at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Since 2018 she has been working as a research assistant for the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, and since 2023 she has been overseeing the art education program at Hamburger Bahnhof | Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart Berlin.

Born in Heidelberg and raised in Paris. After studying film studies, political science and history, Felix von Boehm founded the communications agency art/beats specialized in digital communication for cultural institutions and museums and working for clients across Germany. After studying film production at the Filmakademie Ludwigsburg and La Fémis in Paris, the French state film school, he founded the film production company LUPA FILM GmbH, with which he produced the Grimme Prize-winning television series EDEN (ARD) and the motion picture FABIAN that won the German Film Prize and the Günter Rohrbach Prize.

*Press release distributed by Wire Association on behalf of Volkswagen, on Dec 6, 2023. For more information subscribe and [follow us](#).*

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