

The establishment of the International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art (IKT) in context of the contemporary art field 1967-1973

The *IKT - International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art* today has over 300 members active as curators of contemporary art not only throughout Europe but also in the USA, Canada, South America and Asia. The IKT is over 40 years old. It evolved during the period 1967-1973 in Germany. It was not until 1973 that it was first constituted as a registered association under the presidency of Eberhard Roters, then director of the Berlin Akademie der Künste, and was later to assume a much more international character during various developments that took place during the 1990s.

The first, as yet still informal meeting of the *International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art* took place in the West Berlin *Akademie der Künste* under the directorship of Elisabeth Killy (Berlin *Akademie der Künste*) and Eberhard Roters (*Berlin Kunstverein*, later also *Akademie der Künste*). The meeting served as an informal platform for an exchange between *exhibition makers*. A total of 40 curators - mainly German - got together. Among the few international members from the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland were Eddy de Wilde, at this time Director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, Jean Leering (*Stedelijk Museum Eindhoven*) and Harald Szeemann, then still at the Kunsthalle in Berne¹. Only one year later representatives from the corresponding British and French art institutions joined the group, including the head of the *Arts Council England* and of the *Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)*, London, and the directors of the *Centre National d'Art Moderne* and *Centre National d'Art Contemporain*, Paris. Other curators who are still relevant today, like Jean-Christophe Ammann (*Kunstmuseum Luzern*), Peter Althaus (*Kunsthalle Basel*) and Johannes Cladders (*Städtisches Museum Mönchengladbach*) were to take part in the second meeting of exhibition makers in 1968. Although form and content of the first meetings were very loosely structured, all those involved shared the desire to make exhibiting contemporary art on a non-commercial basis more professional and to place it on an international footing. The point of the meeting was to emphasise exchange processes rather than just establishing another association.²

The origins of the IKT in Germany are to be found in the country's federal structure. The unique diversity and decentrality of German *Kunsthallen* and *Kunstvereine* and the few

museums³ with a main focus on contemporary art at that time fuelled the desire to set up conferences as a temporary central platform for exchange between curators acting also as information hubs.⁴ The choice of meeting locations - relevant institutions of contemporary art such as the Kunsthalle Bern (1969), the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (1968) or the Louisiana Museum in Humlebaek near Copenhagen (1974) - also had a symbolic aspect. It reflected the IKT's role as part of a developing network of European contemporary art institutions and its links with an international art world the centre of which was then in New York. It took time for the Rhineland to evolve into a significant location for contemporary art.⁵ Among many other factors, the emergence of a thriving art market in the Rhineland played a key role in the development of a lively contemporary art scene in Germany. Art Cologne, founded in 1967 as the first contemporary art fair in the world, the outstanding role played by the Düsseldorf gallerist Konrad Fischer⁶, who brought key figures of Conceptual Art to Europe and the Düsseldorf art fair *PROSPECT* founded by Fischer and Hans Strelow in 1968 as a contrasting model to Art Cologne, are just a few examples.⁷ If contemporary art of the 1960s and 1970s is viewed in its overall context to include major exhibitions like documenta, publications, fairs and the relevant exhibition institutions, the number of members and co-founders of the IKT occupying important positions is striking.⁸

Yet exhibition makers in their local contexts had a tendency to be isolated figures. In creating the IKT, they were looking for a solidarity effect and saw the association not as a bureaucratic body but as a practical aid in the pioneering task of organizing exhibitions. Many of the exhibition makers were new to the field or had just completed their university studies,⁹ finding themselves confronted for the first time with running an exhibition of contemporary art with the many tax, insurance and transport aspects this entails. These issues could be aired at the IKT meetings. One of the main components of the annual conferences was the exchange of exhibitions - the so-called *exhibition market (Ausstellungsbörse)* - allowing the best possible use of the institutions' low budgets. Issues concerning professional image were also the subject of debate.

The figure of the exhibition maker or curator, acting as an intermediary outside the museum system grew in importance in the sphere of contemporary art during the 1960s. The term 'exhibition maker' is a pointer to the close link between the function of curator for contemporary art and the medium of a - temporary - exhibition. After the Second World War, the latter gained in importance in comparison to permanent exhibitions and their presentation of precious objects, their prestigious status secured by art history. Working as an 'exhibition

maker' is not usually the product of formal education and training but is defined by skills acquired on an individual basis. The term 'curator,' on the other hand, is a term from the English-speaking world for someone who - often on a freelance basis - is involved with exhibiting contemporary art and did not become widespread in Germany until the 1990s.¹⁰

The exhibition makers who belonged to the IKT 1967-1973 were without exception embedded in an institutional context. A growing number of the Kunstvereine and Kunsthallen in Germany hitherto organized on a largely voluntary basis could now 'afford' professional directors and offered exhibition makers a new field of activity. This development was closely linked to the expansion of the contemporary art field, bolstered in part by the growth and democratization of the art market plus the increasing differentiation between the various functions and positions of the actors within this field. This in turn is additionally linked to the overall expansion of the population and of education in Germany following Second World War and the growing importance attached to a leisure culture. A survey conducted by the IKT on the *Situation of Exhibition Institutions* in 1972/73 revealed that a majority of IKT's exhibition makers saw their role as *intermediaries* between the artists and the institutions' public, coupled with a remit to educate and enlighten, bringing contemporary art closer to a broad part of the population. The work style of Harald Szeemann as a free, independent curator who gave priority to values such as subjectivity and autonomy was an absolute exception at the time and did not become widespread until the 1990s.¹¹ In the 1960s and 70s, he was the only exhibition maker in the IKT who, after leaving the Kunsthalle in Berne in 1969, was not on the staff of any institution. Most IKT members did not work in museums though since most museums at that time had a conservative, bourgeois attitude towards art and saw their role as consisting solely in presenting historic values. This was often achieved in an antiquated manner and frequently had negative effects.¹² In contrast exhibition makers, including members of the IKT aimed to achieve a progressive style of exhibiting inspired by institutions in the Netherlands and the USA. In this context the Kunstvereine were the more flexible organisations, their more conservative, bourgeois clientele being steadily replaced by academics and students who called for politically committed art and the much prized connection between art and life, sometimes even including attempts at co-opting by members of the student movement and demands for bottom-up democratic codetermination in the programmes of the Kunstvereine.¹³ The role of Kunstvereine also came under debate in government quarters as heads these institutions found themselves increasingly confronted with massive budget cuts and also with attempts of censorship when exhibition themes were perceived as 'too political'.¹⁴

The whole issue of public financing of the Kunstvereine became a subject for debate in the late 1960s and early 1970s – bodies which in the early years of their existence in the 19th century had in fact been privately funded by the bourgeoisie. Many Kunstvereine struggled to survive and some could only keep going thanks to funds from the sale of limited editions, the so-called *Jahresgaben*.

In the light of these developments it was all the more important - in Germany in particular - that the establishment of the IKT should document the professionalism of exhibition makers, their attendant privileges, and also their place in the international field of contemporary avant-garde art. Regional isolation and precarious economic and political circumstances prompted exhibition makers to seek professional support among their own kind. Desire for mutual support and solidarity was linked to the call for professional standards. As early as 1968 it had become apparent that the IKT should also act as an “interest group representing the profession in dealings with the general public”¹⁵ as well as creating greater interest in the profession of the curator, virtually becoming a lobby.

The need for this was made more urgent by the cultural and political developments in Germany. Under the first Social Democrat Chancellor, cultural policy in Germany from 1969 on started to make progress and the opportunity arose for the IKT and other cultural associations to play a role in this development. Yet these prospects could not disguise the fact that for many of the Kunstvereine and exhibition institutions, the situation was unsettled. In some areas budget cuts were so drastic that not only the programme but also the very existence of some full-time positions of Kunstvereins directors were threatened. Additionally there was criticism from political quarters and from the local members of Kunstvereine aimed at the often politically committed and internationally oriented avant-garde programmes of the Kunstvereine. “We were often alone”, reports Uwe M. Schneede, “and were often fighting against our board, our members, and I for my part in Stuttgart, against the local artists. [...] So the need did arise to share experiences with others. This kind of support which is normally only available through lobbies was very important.”¹⁶

It was in this situation that in 1973 the IKT launched a *Survey on the Situation of Exhibition Institutions*, the first of its kind to collate the personnel structures, number of visitors and financing models of the Kunstvereine so as to have a basis for discussion with politicians and governments. The results of this survey on the precarious situation of the Kunstvereine prompted the establishment of the IKT as a mutual support community, as pointed out by the IKT press spokesman in a newspaper article in 1974:

“The Association now has over sixty members. This tells us that exhibition curators, in Germany in particular, have realised that they need to join together to represent their interests. They were led to this conclusion by realising that they can achieve nothing on an individual basis. Joining together to act is the only opportunity available to avoid the gradual suffocation of any kind of activity in the field of art mediation (leaving aside commercial considerations).”¹⁷

Thus in 1973 the members of the IKT decided, after six years of meeting informally, to formally establish the IKT as a *registered association*. This meant that it could also in part act as a professional association giving exhibition makers backup at a superior level. The solidarity of exhibition makers was designed to lead to a strengthening of the individual actors and forge a feeling of self-confidence among exhibition makers vis-à-vis political forces and other actors in the art sector, showing them to be capable of acting (at least partially) independently of any political or economic restrictions.¹⁸ The IKT thus became - in addition to its role in supporting the organisation of exhibitions - a *pressure group* enforcing the professional interests of exhibition makers:

“In founding this association a statement was being made: there is a new, qualified profession; a profession in its own right that is different from a museum employee or a museum director, not connected to private galleries. It invites people, mainly situated in Kunstvereine or occasionally in government organisations, who act independently and organise exhibitions of contemporary and modern art. This underlining of autonomy and professionalism alone will have exerted influence.”¹⁹

In November 1973, 31 exhibition makers assembled in the Berlin *Akademie der Künste* to found the *Internationale Kunstausstellungsleitertagung e.V. (International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art)*²⁰ as a registered association with the purpose of representing and realising exhibition makers’ interests politically in an appropriate manner. One of the aims was to improve the working conditions of exhibition makers in non-commercial art organisations; this was apparently a pressing concern and the IKT grew rapidly in the following years.²¹ In order to underscore the effect on the outside world and to create a wider public beyond the field of art that would be aware of the interests of exhibition makers, Klaus Honnef was elected press spokesman of the IKT. In interviews and articles he repeatedly drew attention to the precarious situation of exhibition makers and their organisations.²²

The IKT was therefore part of the general trend towards the establishment and institutionalisation of what had been achieved in the 1960s and early 70s within the art field. The Exhibition Market as part of IKT was also being institutionalised. Between 1974 and 1990 the Exhibition Market appeared as a printed dossier named *Informationen zur Ausstellungsplanung* of some 100 pages, promoted by the *Institute for Foreign Relations (ifa)*

and *Deutscher Museumsbund (German Museum Federation)*, listing all exhibitions available for exchange with the relevant data. It was broadly distributed throughout the Germanspeaking world and also targeted non-members of IKT.

The establishment of links to the *AICA (Association Internationale des Critiques d'Arts)*, the *BBK (Bund Bildender Künstler)* and to the *Deutscher Künstlerbund (German Artists' Federation)* went some way to meeting IKT's desire to play a role in shaping Germany's cultural policy.²³ Representatives of IKT were also involved in culture policy bodies of the Federal Republic of Germany. In context of IKT's commitment to German culture policy, a German section was created in addition to the annual international congresses. It held separate annual conferences in which specifically German culture policy issues were deliberated. This division ended in 1991 due to the increasingly international membership structure and the transnational interests of exhibition makers and curators in general. The internationalisation of the IKT received a decided boost in 1999 with the presidency of Saskia Bos as first non-German IKT chair.

In conclusion it can be stated that the IKT as a solidarity fellowship between curators and exhibition makers in the art world is unique.²⁴ The idea of joining forces to take action against unsatisfactory working conditions and uncertain political constellations certainly owes much to the 'spirit' of the 1960s. Quite apart from this aspect, the founding of the IKT was only really possible in the period 1967-1973 as actors with the appropriate dispositions in an art field undergoing major transitions were on the spot. The emergence of exhibition makers as a key element in the art field was not only contingent upon the certain kind of art and a specific social climate. The concentration of forces of innovative forces through the formation of groups such as the IKT can serve as driving force to implement cultural innovation and thus promote the appropriate positioning within the art field – in this case the main issue was the first specific definition of the interests of the emerging profession of curator.²⁵ The IKT thereby claimed the legitimacy of the position of exhibition makers in the field of contemporary art and so pursued professional policy objectives to compensate for the absence of any standardised training and qualification options. For curators of contemporary art this aspect of professional policy can be described as a principle of professional stabilisation achieved through social networking aiming at strategic strength. The 'objectification' of the IKT as an institution, i.e. a registered association in which material and symbolic achievements continued to exist independent of individual actors, was thus able to ensure its existence up to the present day.²⁶

From a historical perspective it can be stated that the IKT provided a network for the relevant actors in the German and European art field. Initially this was admittedly a very small network, a closely-knit group with members connected by personal friendships, which is also similar to the structure characteristic for the structure of the *movement circles* described by the sociologist Charles Kadushin.²⁷ Despite this solidarity and the network character of the IKT, it should be emphasised that, seen from a historical perspective, it was very inconspicuous. This was due on the one hand to the emphasis on the individuality of the various exhibition makers in their professional contexts, i.e. in relation to exhibitions, publications, etc., and on the other hand, to an academic approach to art that took some time to start researching careers in the contemporary art field as results of collaborative networking between several actors.²⁸ In the final analysis the relevance of the IKT is revealed by a glance at its first members, the informal and official founding members of this association that assumed the role of an international network of homogenous actors. Network connections, even the careers of artists and the mutual dependencies between institutions will become more transparent and plausible through greater awareness of the IKT.

This awareness of the presence of the IKT is thus a key piece in the puzzle of the growing art historical and art theoretical research of art and the art field of the 1960s and 1970s.

Considered from an art historical perspective on the positioning and career trajectories of actors involved in the artfield of the 1960s and 1970s, it becomes clear that the IKT had brought together relevant actors for a limited period of time including personalities such as Harald Szeemann, Pontus Hultén, Jean Leering, Werner Hofmann and Johannes Cladders. The extent to which the IKT itself contributed to the relevance of these actors remains to be assessed by further research.

Stephanie Seidel

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¹ Full list of the participants at the first International Conferences of Curators of Contemporary Art: Eddy de Wilde, Stedelijk-Museum Amsterdam; Dorothea von Stetten, Cultural Section, Embassy of the United States of America, Bad Godesberg; Arnold Rüdinger, Kunsthalle Basel; Elisabeth Killy, Peter Löffler, both Akademie der Künste Berlin; Eberhard Roters and Adolf Arndt, both Deutsche Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst e. V. Berlin; Thomas Kempas, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin; Leopold Reitmeister; Andreas Grote, Staatliche Museen der Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, General Administration, External Office, Berlin; Werner Haftmann, Staatliche Museen der Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nationalgalerie Berlin; Harald Szeemann, Kunsthalle Berne; Peter Leo, Städtische Kunstgalerie, Bochum; Eberhard Marx, Städtische Kunstsammlungen Bonn; Henning Bock, Kunsthalle Bremen; Bernd Krimmel, Art Department of the city of Darmstadt; L. J. F. Wijsenbeek, Haags Gemeentemuseum, the Hague; Karl-Heinz Hering, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Karl Ruhrberg, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf; Jean Leering, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven; Paul Vogt, Museum Folkwang, Essen; Ewald Rathke, Kunstverein Frankfurt; Rolf Jüdes, Kunstverein Hannover; Wieland Schmied, Kestner-Gesellschaft e. V., Hannover; Elisabeth von Chappius, Heidelberger Kunstverein; Walter Nikusch, Kasseler Kunstverein; Toni Feldenkirchen, Kölnischer Kunstverein; W. Fröhlich, Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum, Köln; Rolf Wedewer, Städtisches Museum Leverkusen; Hans-Friedrich Geist, Overbeck-Gesellschaft, Lübeck; Erika Hanfstaengl, Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich; C. O. Müller, Haus der Kunst, Munich; Friedrich Heckmanns, Westfälischer Kunstverein, Münster; Reiner Kallhardt, Kunstsammlungen Stadt Nürnberg; Thomas Grochowiak, Museen der Stadt Recklinghausen; Dieter Honisch, Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart; Gunther Thiem, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart; Werner Hofmann, Museum of the 20th Century, Vienna; Volkmar Köhler, Kunstverein Wolfsburg; Günther Aust, Von der Heydt-Museum der Stadt Wuppertal.

(cf. ZADIK – Zentralarchiv des Internationalen Kunsthandels, Inventory C5, Abt. VI, No. 1, Report on meeting of exhibitors in the Akademie der Künste, 2./3.5.1967)

² Wulf Herzogenrath commented in an interview with the author that the ridiculously long and complicated name of the IKT alone was negating the class clique club culture.

³ For instance the *Städtische Museum Mönchengladbach* headed by Johannes Cladders or *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Museum/ Museum Haus Lange* in Krefeld with Paul Wember as director. These museums were often inspired by the purchasing and presentation policies of Dutch museums such as the *Stedelijk-Museum* in Amsterdam under Willem Sandberg (in the period 1938-1962).

⁴ There was no central location where information on exhibitions of contemporary art were recorded and processed. The IKT was thus one of the few (virtual) places where this information could be obtained. At one of the first meetings it was suggested setting up a central register for contemporary art institutions that could be looked at in Switzerland. (cf. ZADIK – Zentralarchiv des Internationalen Kunsthandels, Inventory C5, Abt. VI, No. 1, report on the curators meeting in the Akademie der Künste, 2./3.5.1967)

⁵ Relevant in this context are, among many others, the founding of the ZERO artists group in the late 1950s in Düsseldorf and the role of Cologne as an important centre for New Music that also attracted visual artists in the 1960s. Growing economic prosperity and the attendant emergence of a clientele of collectors also played a part. Important collections like those of Peter and Irene Ludwig or the Ströher Collection also date from this period in the Rhineland.

⁶ *Ausstellungen bei Konrad Fischer* was founded in Düsseldorf in 1967. Artists such as Sol LeWitt, Bruce Nauman, Lawrence Weiner, Hanne Darboven, Daniel Buren, Mario Merz and Gilbert & George had their first solo exhibitions here.

⁷ Generally speaking the commercial and non-commercial spheres of contemporary art, particularly in the 1960s, cannot be strictly separated due to the relatively low rate of institutionalisation. More common by that time is a collaboration of both spheres and a common aim to promote contemporary art.

⁸ Some examples among many here are the collaboration between Klaus Honnef and Konrad Fischer in conceptualising the *Idee und Idee/Licht* section at the documenta 5, of course Harald Szeemann himself as head of documenta 5 and Karl Ruhrberg as founding director of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf and later of the Cologne Museum Ludwig.

⁹ At the age of 28, Wulf Herzogenrath had just finished his doctorate and in 1973 was the youngest director of a Kunstverein in Germany. Klaus Honnef and Karl Ruhrberg had, amongst other things, also worked as sports reporters before becoming exhibition makers.

¹⁰ Originally the term curator or custodian was used to describe a museum employee engaged in the conservation and supervision of a museum's collection of works. The exhibition makers of the 1960s wanted to clearly distance themselves from this function.

¹¹ On the history of curators see for example von Bismarck, Beatrice (2006): *Curating*. In: Butin, Hubertus (Ed.), *DuMonts Begriffslexikon zur zeitgenössischen Kunst*, Köln: DuMont, p. 56-59 and von Bismarck, Beatrice (2007): *Curatorial Criticality. Zur Rolle freier Kurator/innen im zeitgenössischen Kunstfeld*. In: Eigenheer, Marianne (Ed.), *Curating Critique*, Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, Archiv für Aktuelle Kunst, pp. 70-78. On the phenomenon of the curator and exhibition auteur, see inter alia Grammel, Søren (2005): *Ausstellungsautorschaft. Die Konstruktion der auktorialen Position des Kurators bei Harald Szeemann. Eine Mikroanalyse*. Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, Archiv für Aktuelle Kunst and Heinich, Nathalie; Michael Pollak (1996): *From museum curator to exhibition auteur. Inventing a singular position*. In: Greenberg, Reesa; Bruce W. Ferguson, Sandy Nairne (Ed.), *Thinking about exhibitions*, London: Routledge, pp. 231-250.

¹² Klaus Honnef in an interview with the author, 7.10.2009: "In German museums the walls were dung-coloured, the pictures full of varnish and with salon hanging, perhaps with some relation to the history of art, although no one could recognise this. It bored you to death." Uwe M. Schneede also describes German museums in the 1960s as "dusty and frumpish".

¹³ The *Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst e. V. (NGBK)* in Berlin is still today a striking example of this. It originated from the splitting up of the former Berlin Kunstverein into a bourgeois, conservative and a politically progressive camp in 1969, where the exhibition programme was decided by grass-roots democracy. In 1969, too, a Go-In took place during the opening of the first Minimal Art Exhibition in Germany in the Düsseldorfer Kunsthalle under the direction of Karl Ruhrberg, which from the perspective of the protesters, was mere aesthetic affirmation instead of a politically relevant content.

¹⁴ As for example exhibitions organised by Uwe M. Schneede and Georg Bussmann that picked up communist-related themes and often provoked massive public and political criticism, sometimes exhibitions were even closed down earlier.

¹⁵ ZADIK – Zentralarchiv des Internationalen Kunsthandels, Inventory C5, Abt. VI, No. 1, minutes of the curators conference in the Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 21./22.11.1968.

¹⁶ Uwe M. Schneede in an interview with the author, 4.11.2009.

Further revealing reports on the situation of Kunstvereine in the early 1970s can be found inter alia: Sager, Peter (1972): *Am Ende einer bürgerlichen Institution. Zur Situation und Zukunft der Kunstvereine*. In: *Das Kunstwerk*, Nr. 1, XXV, Januar 1972, pp. 6-7.

Honnef, Klaus (1973 a): *Das neue Selbstverständnis der Kunstvereine. Promotoren eines avancierten Kunstbegriffs*. In: *Kunstforum International*, No. 6/7, pp. 126-130.

¹⁷ Honnef, Klaus (1974): *Tagebuch*. In: *Kunstforum International*, No. 11, 1974, pp. 201-208, here p. 203 f.

¹⁸ A notable example here is the attempt by the Documenta management to make Harald Szeemann as Secretary General personally responsible for the financial deficit of documenta 5. This was energetically denied by IKT in a public letter of protest actively supporting Harald Szeemann as member of IKT representing exhibition makers in general since they saw their own interests as being affected by this kind of precedent.

This incident is additionally the only occasion of IKT being mentioned in the literature:

cf. Kimpel, Harald (1997): *documenta. Mythos und Wirklichkeit*. Köln: DuMont, p. 206; Nachtigäller, Roland; Friedhelm Scharf, Karin Stengel (Ed.) (2001): *Wiedervorlage d5. Eine Befragung des Archivs zur Documenta 1972*. Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, p. 193.

¹⁹ Uwe M. Schneede in an interview with the author, 4.11.2009.

²⁰ Founding members of the IKT e. V.: Karin Bergqvist-Lindegren (Royal Swedish Embassy Bonn), Jaap Bremer (Stedelijk van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven), Georg Bussmann (Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt), Ingrid Deecke (Overbeck-Gesellschaft Lübeck), M. Fath (Städtische Kunstsammlungen Ludwigshafen), K. M. Fischer (Kunstverein Ingolstadt), Hans Gercke (Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg), Michael Haerdter (freelance, Berlin), Jürgen Harten (Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf), Herbert Heck (Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf), Curt Heigl (Kunsthalle Nürnberg), Wulf Herzogenrath (Kölnischer Kunstverein), Peter Hielscher (Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, Berlin), Klaus Honnef (Westfälischer Kunstverein Münster), Reiner Kallhardt (Gesamthochschule Kassel), Thomas Kempas (Haus am Waldsee Berlin), Elisabeth Killy (Akademie der Künste Berlin), Jean Leering (Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven), Heimo Liebich (Kunstverein München), Tilman Osterwold (Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart), Hermann Pollig (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)

Stuttgart), Eberhard Roters (Akademie der Künste Berlin), Karl Ruhrberg (DAAD - Deutscher Akademischen Austauschdienst, Berlin), Siegfried Salzmann (Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum Duisburg), Manfred Schneckenburger (Kunsthalle Cologne), Uwe Schneede (Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart), Katharina Schmidt (Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf), H. M. Schmidt (Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt), Gisa Stute (Kunstverein München), P. Spielmann (Museum Bochum), Harald Szeemann (Bern), Rolf Wedewer (Städtisches Museum Leverkusen, Schloß Morsbroich), Bernd Weyergraf (Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst Berlin), Istvan Szenassy (Bonniefantemuseum Maastricht).

(cf. NGBK – Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst Berlin, Archive, Unclassified Inventory (IKT), Minutes of meeting of the International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art (IKT) Akademie der Künste, Berlin, 26./27.11.1973, pp.1f.).

²¹In 1975 the IKT already had 59 members with a growth trend in the following years.

²² Amongst others: Honnef, Klaus (1973): Das neue Selbstverständnis der Kunstvereine. Promotoren eines avancierten Kunstbegriffs. In: Kunstforum International, No. 6/7, pp. 126-130; Honnef, Klaus (1973): Tagebuch. In: Kunstforum International, No. 1, pp. 168-173, here p. 173; Honnef, Klaus (1973): Tagebuch. In: Kunstforum International, Nro 2/3, 1973, pp. 202-210; author unknown (1975): Künstler-,Honorar' eine verdeckte Leihgebühr? Ein G.A.-Gespräch mit Klaus Honnef. In: Bonner General-Anzeiger, 8./9.3.1975 (ZADIK, Inventory C5, Abt. VI, No. 1).

²³ *ADKV (Working Group of German Kunstvereine)* is a direct successor of the IKT founded in 1980 by members of the IKT exhibition makers in order to focus on specific issues relating solely to German Kunstvereine.

²⁴ The exhibition association *Independent Curators International (iCI)* has existed in New York since 1975 but it is not, like the IKT, an exchange platform for curators. iCI puts together touring exhibitions of contemporary art that go on international tours. There are parallels to associations like the *Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art (AICA)*, but the AICA is structured as an umbrella organization with country sections that are independent of each other. The IKT is less bureaucratically organized and attaches importance to direct contact between members as part of the conferences held.

²⁵ cf. Thurn, Hans Peter (1983): Die Sozialität der Solitären. Gruppen und Netzwerke in der Bildenden Kunst. In: Neidhardt, Friedhelm (Ed.), Gruppensoziologie. Perspektiven und Materialien, Sonderheft 25/1983, Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, pp. 287-318.

²⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre (1987) : Sozialer Sinn. Kritik der theoretischen Vernunft. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, p. 239.

²⁷ Kadushin, Charles (1976): Networks and Circles in the Production of Culture. In: American Behavioral Scientist, No. 19, pp. 769-784.

²⁸ See for instance Richard, Sophie (2009): Unconcealed: The International Network of Conceptual Artists 1967-77 – Dealers, Exhibitions and Public Collections. London: Ridinghouse.

This essay is based on the master's thesis submitted to the University of Lüneburg in 2010 entitled "The Institutionalisation of Contemporary Art in Germany in the 1970s – the Establishment of the International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art (IKT) e.V.". The author cultural scientist and assistant curator at the NAK. Neuer Aachener Kunstverein in Aachen.