



## PRESS TEXT

The first lockdown in March 2020 already brought the entire cultural sector to a standstill. At that time, on the initiative of stage director Magdalena Weingut, a number of freelance artists gathered in a Facebook group to free themselves from the shock of the cultural standstill and to actively and collectively stand up for the solo self-employed in the music theatre landscape.

In this group (which now has more than 1800 followers), current issues and problems of the solo self-employed have been discussed and debated ever since.

Courageous and undogmatic!

These are the central values that krea[K]tiv - musiktheater stands up e.V. has taken up.

We work on a committed and voluntary basis.

Singers, musical performers, agents, coaches, directors and cultural managers, some of whom have never met in real life, have been meeting online every week in working groups to discuss current problems and find solutions.

In the Inner Circle of krea[K]tiv there are committed colleagues who have also publicly spoken out, such as - to name just one - the tenor and lawyer Wolfgang Schwaninger, who spoke out about legal problems during the COVID 19 crisis in the press and who supports colleagues in contractual issues.

In the meantime, this small group of opera professionals has developed into a highly regarded initiative: krea[K]tiv musiktheater stands up e.V., now an association, was awarded the "Bühnenheld\*innen 2020" prize by the Federal Association for the Performing Arts in November 2020 for its work.



From the very beginning, krea[K]tiv has sought solidarity with like-minded initiatives and therefore works intensively with the GDBA (Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnenangehöriger) as well as with the Ensemble Netzwerk, #aufstehenfuerkunst, the GMD and Chief Conductors Conference, the Bühnenverein as well as the [DOKA](#), the German speaking Opera and Concert agencies.

krea[K]tiv musiktheater-stands up articulates concretely the needs of freelancers, which have so far received too little attention in the trade unions (with primarily permanent employees).

The pandemic has made the existing grievances for this part of the industry even clearer. Many solo self-employed workers, who until now were only on the road as lone warriors, have been persuaded to show solidarity and join us to represent their interests collectively.

Every day, new issues are brought to krea[K]tiv, which we deal with in different working groups.

At the moment, the main focus of our association is on improving the working conditions and social security of artists during the Corona crisis and beyond. Stage artists and all those who work with them beyond the stage light fall through almost all grids of state aid.

Publicly funded theatres and festivals often refuse to pay adequate compensation, despite existing employment contracts.

The opera world is not very big, people know each other there - this has many advantages - people exchange ideas, discuss problems and can support each other more quickly across national borders. Hardly any other theatre sector is as international as opera. Opera artists from all over the world work in Germany and, conversely, many German artists work abroad. In July, krea[K]tiv - musiktheater stands up was a co-founder of the European "LyriCoalition", which regularly exchanges information virtually with other European unions: France (Unisson), Italy (Assolirica), Spain (ALE) or Sweden (Teaterförbundet), Union des Artistes du Spectacle Belgique (Belgium) or stimm-ig (Austria).

The COVID 19 pandemic shows that in all countries there must be new minimum standards for contracts that guarantee financial security.

In the future, there must be no more clauses that are designed in such a way that if the contract fails (for whatever reason), the consequences are dumped solely on the shoulders of the artist(s).

Equally important are common European standards for dealing with abuse of power and the establishment of mediation centres for education and prevention.

We are also very concerned about the needs and concerns of future generations of artists. What will their future look like? From the association with this target group, krea[K]tiv jeunesse was born in July 2021. Within krea[K]tiv jeunesse, regular workshops take place that focus on support, mentoring and further education. The self-empowerment of the young artists is a particular concern of ours. This is expressed in the self-managed Instagram account krea[K]tiv jeunesse as well as the forum "jeunesse-backstage", where the registered participants exchange information about professional matters in a protected space.



Whether it's the artists' social insurance fund or the employment agency - there are many unanswered questions. The need is great for many; every day new enquiries come to the krea[K]tiv members: it's about Hartz IV applications, questions about contracts, generally about the exchange of information.

The association krea[K]tiv explains practical information about insurance or default clauses on its YouTube channel (#shortCuts) and is working on the evaluation of a survey (which has been running since September 2020) about defaults and the psychological as well as economic consequences of the Corona crisis.

krea[K]tiv wants to bring the relevance of opera in the 21st century back to the centre of social and societal attention.

We are happy to answer any questions and look forward to a lively exchange and reporting on our work.

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