

Follow-up

Jour Fixe of the Friends of Gutenberg on October 27, 2022 at 6 p.m. at the Kulturei Mainz

Topic: Thoughts about books - about a book series, the Stiftung Buchkunst and many other things

Speaker: Silvia Werfel M. A.

A lecture with books to touch, browse and discuss

On Thursday, October 27, 2022, at 6 p.m., the Jour Fixe of the Internationale Gutenberg-Gesellschaft in Mainz e.V. and the Gutenberg Foundation took place under the motto "Wine and Knowledge" with a lecture by Silvia Werfel on the topic "Thoughts about books - about a book series, the Stiftung Buchkunst and much more" in the Kulturei Mainz.

As an introduction, Silvia Werfel pointed out that the printed book has a special quality that cannot be transferred to an electronic format. Rather, something is lost in the electronic presentation of a text due to the lack of haptics. The designer always chooses the format, paper and cover to match the book genre, content and use.

Werfel then presented the book series "Aesthetics of the Book," published by Klaus Detjen at Wallstein Verlag. Since 2013, 16 volumes have already appeared there, following Detjen's claim to "constantly reinvent typography." The series has precise formal specifications: there is a consistent, handy format and the volumes are bound as "English brochures". Each volume contains between 48 and 88 pages, printed on uncoated paper. By using different typefaces in each work, the series also functions as a type collection.

During the lecture, the guests were given the books of the series, could look at the diverse design and gained an insight into the different topics. In addition to the theoretical presentation, they were also able to experience the individual volumes haptically. Although the focus of the series is on the text, it is also a design statement.

Werfel also passed around other books and talked about current trends in book design and their (sometimes lack of) quality. She addressed, for example, the varying width of margins or the specifics of type for digital media, which must be stronger in contrast than in print.

The 14th volume of the series "Book Design in Germany", edited by Silvia Werfel herself, is the first volume to offer a larger, yet highly condensed overview of a topic with more illustrations. She told the guests about working with the 15 featured typographers and the challenges of designing the work.

During the final open discussion, Werfel invited participants to share their own thoughts on the quality of a book or its design and added to the points raised from a designer's perspective. She summed up by saying that microtypography and its influence on the reception of a text is, in her opinion, significantly underestimated.

Moreover, in her opinion, the goal of a book designer should always be a reader-friendly book.

At the end of the evening, two wines were presented for tasting by Wein-gut Rettig from Westhofen. We would like to thank our speaker for the informative and entertaining lecture and all participants and guests for the enjoyable evening!