VDZ Publishers’ Night: awarding of "Reporters Without Borders" with the "Golden Victoria 2019 for Freedom of the Press"

Jan Josef Liefers to deliver the laudatory speech at the Publishers' Night on 4th November 2019 in Berlin

Berlin, 15th October 2019 - The Association of German Magazine Publishers (VDZ) is to award "Reporters Without Borders" with the "Golden Victoria for Freedom of the Press". The award will honour the worldwide commitment to independent, free journalism and freedom of the press and information in extremely challenging times. Christophe Deloire, secretary general of the international organisation and Katja Gloger, spokesperson for the executive committee of the German section, will receive the award.

Since 1985, the organisation has been active around the world as an advocate for freedom of information and media. True to the motto "no freedom without freedom of the press", it pursues the goal of drawing attention to threatened journalists and media and standing up for their rights. “This commitment is all the more important today, with freedom and independence of the press no longer being a matter of course even in Europe. The tireless commitment to free reporting and independent journalism calls for courage in spite of all the obstacles. They give a voice to journalists who are threatened in their home countries and unable to exercise their freedom of expression. They sensitise the public to threats to the freedom of the press – an important topic for all of us," explains VDZ President, Dr. Rudolf Thiemann.

The "Golden Victoria - Freedom of the Press" will be presented by Jan Josef Liefers, who will also deliver the laudatory speech. The artist grew up in Dresden and began his career at the Deutsches Theater Berlin. A few days before the fall of the Berlin Wall, on 4th November 1989, Liefers was one of the speakers at the concluding rally of the DDR’s largest free demonstration on the Alexanderplatz. In front of around 600,000 people, he called for old structures to be broken up in order to create new structures that would enable democratic co-existence. “We are very pleased that Jan Josef Liefers will be presenting the Victoria for the Freedom of the Press, 30 years to the day after the date of this historic event. As an artist, Jan Josef Liefers advocates freedom of expression – both as an actor and as a musician. In this, mutual respect that does not restrict the freedom of others is indispensable for him," stresses Dr. Rudolf Thiemann. In 2011, Jan Josef Liefers received the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his social commitment.

With the "Reporters Without Borders" prize winners and speech-giver, Jan Josef Liefers, on this evening the VDZ Publishers' night will be sending a clear signal for freedom of the press, diversity and democratic co-operation – these values are among publishers' most important concerns.

The "Golden Victoria for Freedom of the Press" has, since 2015, been awarded to personalities noted for their essential commitment and outstanding courage and commitment to freedom of the press; two of these even paid for this with their lives: Daphne Caruana Galizia (Malta) and Ján Kuciak (Slovakia) were honoured posthumously in 2018. Alongside Ensaf Haidar from Saudi Arabia (2017) and Can Dundar from Turkey (2016), Farida Nekzad from Afghanistan, Ana Lilia Pérez from Mexico and the German, Peter Bandermann, (all 2015) have also been awarded the "Golden Victoria".
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About the VDZ:
The VDZ (Association of German Magazine Publishers Association) represents the interests of the German magazine industry. As an umbrella organisation, which is organised into three professional associations (trade press, denominational press, popular magazines) and five regional associations, it has around 450 member publishers who, with more than 7,000 magazine brands, represent around 80 percent of the German magazine market. As a service association, the VDZ provides the publishers with a wide range of consulting, information and other services in all areas of the publishing business (advertisements, sales, digital media, legal issues, business, the environment and paper). As an economic association, it is committed at both a German and European level to the ensuring and consideration of the interests of publishers. And as an employers’ association, on behalf of the national associations, it conducts collective bargaining negotiations with the trade unions for the publishers. Furthermore, by means of the VDZ Academy, the VDZ makes a substantial contribution to education and further training in the media industry. Further information can be found online at: www.vdz.de  www.publishers-summit.de   www.pz-online.de   www.deutsche-fachpresse.de   www.vdz-akademie.de
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