

# *The Parliaments of the Many*

## **WHO ELECTS WHOM?**

Here are a few numbers to provide some food for thought: in Germany, approximately 61 million people have the right to vote in 2021. According to a current study, 7.7% of them, that is, over 4.5 million people, have a closed, extreme right-wing world view. At the same time, 10 million people are living in Germany who do not have German passports and thus are not allowed to take part in the election: that is almost twice as many people as eligible extreme right-wing vote with an antidemocratic political understanding!

The “right to have rights” (Hannah Arendt) cannot be tied to the possession of a passport. Here what we have to say about this: in times of international coexistence we are MANY, and the MANY should be able to participate in the democratic process where they live.

It is already 20 years ago that the visual artist Hans Haacke reacted to the inscription “Dem deutschen Volke” (To the German people) on the Reichstagsgebäude with his artwork *Der Bevölkerung* (*The Population*). This population is diverse, varied and mixed. We’re going to go a step further and demand THE PARLIAMENT OF THE MANY!

More diversity means daring more democracy. This is why THE MANY are consciously posing the question of the further development of democracy during this election year of 2021 by organizing a symbolic election for those who have not yet been allowed to yet. The issue at stake is the right and the freedom to coexist and participate as equal individuals despite differences. The election campaign in the USA has demonstrated how fragile the foundations of democracy are: “Democracy is not a state”, said the US-American civil rights advocate John Lewis, “but an act”. Yes, democracy is neither a state nor a condition; instead, it is an act. And this act begins by voting. It means having an active concern that all people who coexist in a particular area have the opportunity to actively participate in this coexistence democratically.

Within our own ranks as artists, active participants in the cultural sector and cultural institutions, we seek not only to question our artistic practices and programs, but also to specifically connect political action and diversity with democracy.

In thought, action and vision: THE PARLIAMENTS OF THE MANY

**WE ARE MANY, EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US!**

# UNITE&VOTE

The campaign will begin in May of 2021 and continue to expand and network across different regions until the Bundestag elections on September 26. We invite all signatories of the Declaration of the Many to open polling locations within their institutions and groups for those who are not allowed to vote: laboratories for the participation of the MANY in a further development of the notion of democracy. The campaign will be prepared and accompanied with actions, discussions as well as an information and election campaign.

We will use the freedom of art in order to participate specifically in political events and open up future democratic spaces.

## ***Examples of Actions:***

Activating those who are not allowed to vote and addressing them within one's own institution as well (explanation, information, statistics), setting up election campaigns with one's own candidates (representations of minorities), starting a poster campaign, organizing an election (in order to gain an impression of the state of things), electing a Parliament of the Many, organizing an election party for those not allowed to vote, choruses of those not allowed to vote (in public space), election booths in pedestrian areas (in the weeks before the election), inviting artists and experts and integrating them within the schedule of events, finding voting proxies for those not allowed to vote (enable specific voting), recording statistics (and translating them into graphic form).

#uniteandvote #theparliamentsofthemanymy #voteandshine  
#artremainsfree #nazisoutoftheparliaments  
#shineinsteadofostracize #weelectthemanymy