

***Petition Verdi (= United Services Union, member of the German Trade Union
– Section Performing Arts)***

Danger for the Theatre Museum and Hofgärtnerhaus [Court Gardner House] in Düsseldorf

The closure of the Düsseldorf Theatre Museum is being discussed and also the sale of the historic Hofgärtnerhaus [Court Gardner House], where the internationally renowned museum has been housed for over 30 years! This was reported in the WDR-TV show Local Time on May 6, 2016; this report could be viewed in the ARD Mediathek through May 13, 2016.

Suggestions of Düsseldorf local politicians to pursue a sale of the city-owned Baroque building, which dates from 1770 under the then Elector Karl Theodor, is an indication that the city plans to dispose of a major building by selling it to private persons; this in turn could also signal the end of the acclaimed Theatre Museum, which is housed there!

There are indications that the city would like to dispose of two financial birds with one stone: get money from the sale and furthermore save money by closing a museum, rather than finally – as should be the case – assume it's responsibility as owner and renovate this important building. It is hard to believe that a city like Düsseldorf – after all it is the state capital of North Rhine-Westphalia – which for years has proclaimed that it is free of debt, needs to take such steps; still it is to be feared, since there have already been comments to this effect from the city, such as those of the Cultural Minister.

The signatories of this petition hereby appeal to the Düsseldorf City Council and Mayor Thomas Geisel, that the sale of the Hofgärtnerhaus and the impending closure of the Theatre Museum be prevented.

At the same time the Düsseldorf City Council is requested to preserve the Hofgärtnerhaus as a municipal building by commissioning as quickly as possible the renovation of this historically significant building, including the guarantee that following the renovation of the Hofgärtnerhaus the Theatre Museum will be permitted to remain there, if there is no other suitable site within the city for the museum.

Furthermore, it is imperative that the many years of successful work of the museum team – both the full-time staff as well as the volunteers – with its director Dr. Winrich Meiszies be valued, secured and furthered.

You can sign here:

<https://darstellende-kunst.verdi.de/themen/nachrichten/++co++e9cf725e-2a22-11e6-b4ca-52540059119e>