

Press release, 17/10/2023

## Architect Daniel Libeskind awarded the European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma

The **American architect Daniel Libeskind** will be awarded the European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma on October 18, 2023, in Berlin. The European Civil Rights Prize is awarded by the **Central Council** and the **Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma** and the **Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation**, which endows the prize of 15.000 euros. The prize honours outstanding personalities who have rendered outstanding services to the equal participation and human rights of Sinti and Roma in Europe.

In her laudatory speech, the **President of the German Bundestag, Bärbel Bas**, said: "*Daniel Libeskind has created monuments worldwide to the shared memory of the European Jews and Sinti and Roma murdered in the Holocaust. He has thus made a forceful contribution to anchoring the long-ignored genocide of the Sinti and Roma in the public consciousness.*" The President of the Bundestag emphasized, "*The European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma honours Daniel Libeskind's commitment to our culture of remembrance. At the same time, the prize is a call to ensure the social recognition and equal participation of Sinti and Roma in Germany and Europe.*"

The 2023 award honours Daniel Libeskind's worldwide contributions to the culture of remembrance. The commemoration of the Holocaust against Jews and Sinti and Roma is an important component of his artistic and architectural work.

At the award ceremony, **Daniel Libeskind** said, "*I am honored to receive this meaningful recognition of the European Civil Rights Award of the Sinti and Roma. I have spent the entirety of my career dedicated to fighting the erasure of memory and building architecture that is filled with emotion and hope.*" The laureate added, "*This award exemplifies the importance of making memory palpable through experiences in space and giving a voice to those silenced. Without the deliberate decision to hold on to memory and to share our experiences with others, time can surreptitiously erase all.*"

The founder of the European Civil Rights Prize, **Dr. h.c. Manfred Lautenschläger**, emphasizes: "*The European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma is, above all, a signal to the majority population to oppose, in historical memory, the antigypsyism that is once again raising concern today.*" Manfred Lautenschläger combines these concerns in his appeal: "*Civil society is called upon to oppose and outlaw antigypsyism, and thereby contribute to ensuring that Sinti and Roma are no longer forced into anonymity for reaching social equality.*"

The chairman of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, **Romani Rose**, paid tribute to the award winner with the following words: *"With his artistic work, Daniel Libeskind has contributed, internationally, to strengthening the recognition that the Holocaust also meant the murder of 500,000 Sinti and Roma in Nazi-occupied Europe. Knowing the history of this crime against humanity, the ignorance of the member states of the European Union is shameful, with which the inhuman situation of Sinti and Roma is accepted, which has led to apartheid-like conditions especially in Central and Eastern Europe."*

Rose continues, *"Today, we as citizens, as well as our democratic institutions, have a duty to oppose the anti-democratic efforts of nationalist and far-right parties in many European countries, which are once again fomenting sentiment and hatred against Jews and Sinti and Roma."*

The **European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma in memory of Oskar and Vinzenz Rose** will be presented to Daniel Libeskind by the Chairman of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, Romani Rose, and Markus Lautenschläger, the Managing Director of the Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation, at 4 p.m. on October 18, 2023, at the Hotel Adlon Kempinski Berlin.

2 Daniel Libeskind designed the national memorial to the victims of the Holocaust in Amsterdam, which was presented to the Dutch public by King Willem-Alexander and Prime Minister Mark Rutte in 2021. Through his design of the monument in Amsterdam, the U.S. architect deliberately highlights the commonality of the fate of Sinti and Roma and Jews during the persecution during the Nazi era, uniting them in memory in the place he created. The National Holocaust Memorial in Canada, designed by Daniel Libeskind in 2018, is also dedicated to both Jews and Sinti and Roma.

### The European Civil Rights Award of the Sinti and Roma

The European Civil Rights Award is a contribution to the protection and enforcement of the civil rights of Sinti and Roma in their respective home countries. The prize was first awarded in 2008 and is held since 2019 in memory of Vinzenz and Oskar Rose, who significantly initiated and shaped the civil rights work of the minority. The laureates are exemplary advocates of democracy and the rule of law and - in view of the long history of antigypsyism - are role models in their efforts to improve the human rights situation of the Sinti and Roma. Previous laureates were **Wladyslaw Bartoszewski** (†), former Secretary of State and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland (2008), **Simone Veil** (†), former President of the European Parliament (2010), **Thomas Hammarberg**, former Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (2012), **Tilman Zülch** (†), co-founder and president of the Society for Threatened Peoples (2014), the human rights organization **Amnesty International** (2016), former President of the Slovak Republic **Andrej Kiska** (2019), and former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany **Dr. Angela Merkel** (2021).

## The founder of the prize

Dr. h.c. Manfred Lautenschläger is one of the founders of the financial services provider MLP SE, which has been in existence since 1971. He served as its Chief Executive Officer from 1984 to 1999 and then moved to the company's Supervisory Board, of which he has been the Honorary Chairman since 2018. In 2002, he established the Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation, whose purpose it is to promote science and research, education and training, the arts and culture, and international understanding. Manfred Lautenschläger holds an honorary doctorate from the Faculty of Theology at the University of Heidelberg. He is an honorary senator of the University of Heidelberg and the Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies, as well as a member of the University Council of the University of Heidelberg. Since July 2002, Manfred Lautenschläger has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma. The Manfred Lautenschläger Foundation has endowed the European Civil Rights Prize of the Sinti and Roma since 2008.

## Press contacts for further information

Heidrun Helwig, Research Assistant for Press and Public Relations at the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma

Phone: +49 170 8338 875; e-mail: [heidrun.helwig@sintiundroma.de](mailto:heidrun.helwig@sintiundroma.de)

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Aert van Riel, Political Advisor at the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma

Phone: +49 176 6302 7298; e-mail: [Aert.Vanriel@sintiundroma.de](mailto:Aert.Vanriel@sintiundroma.de).

The award ceremony is held under the patronage of the European Parliament.



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European Elections 6-9 June 2024