

Press Release

30 September 2016

Ronald M. Schernikau Archive in the Akademie der Künste

On 7 October, the Akademie der Künste is holding an event to mark the opening of the Ronald M. Schernikau Archive. The writer Ronald M. Schernikau, who died far too young, was an expert on and trenchant critic of post-war German realities. In his multifaceted and uncompromising work, he sought to explain social processes and, in doing so, exploded traditional textual forms and developed his own. His literary estate contains many working manuscripts, correspondence (with, for example, Günter Amendt, Ulrich Berkes, Gisela Elsner, Peter Hacks, Bernd Heimberger, Elfriede Jelinek, Inge Keller, Dietrich Kittner, Gisela Kraft, Irmtraud Morgner, Stefan Ripplinger, and Erika Runge) and major collections related to his works and topics. The archive, which has been fully indexed, covers five linear metres and is now open to the public.

Ronald M. Schernikau (1960-1991), born in Magdeburg, left East Germany with his mother in 1966 and grew up in Lehrte, near Hannover. Highly intelligent and sensitive, he began to rebel against life in provincial Lower Saxony at an early age. Even before completing secondary school, his *Kleinstadtnovelle* had been published, a novel that takes as its theme a young man's coming out and the reaction of the petty bourgeois world around him. When he was 20, Schernikau moved to West Berlin, began to study at university, joined the Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin (SEW), and enjoyed life in the city's unconventional gay scene. In 1986, he was the first West German citizen to be accepted at the "Johannes R. Becher" Institute for Literature at Leipzig University. He took his years in Leipzig as an inspiration for his highly acclaimed literary work *Die Tage in L*. Schernikau was soon aware of the East German system's political limitations and narrow-mindedness, yet his experiences never shook his beliefs in a social ideal. In autumn 1989, at his own wish, he took East German nationality, moved to East Berlin and started work as an editor at the Henschelverlag publishing house. At the same time, he was writing his major work *Legende*, which he managed to finish before he died.

The **Archive Opening**, prepared in cooperation with *schernikau.net*, remembers Ronald M. Schernikau with a reading from his writings and personal papers, music and film excerpts. With Sabine Wolf (Welcome), Stefan Ripplinger (Introduction), Ursula Werner and Thorsten Hierse (readings), Volkmar Paschold (music).

Event Details

Friday 7 October 2016, 8 pm, Admission € 5/3

Akademie der Künste, Hanseatenweg 10, 10557 Berlin

Ticket reservations: Tel. +49 (0)30 20057-2000 or online www.adk.de

Press tickets: Tel. +49 (0)30 20057-1514 or presse@adk.de

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