



Press Release

The American Academy in Berlin Celebrates 25 Years of Transatlantic Exchange with an Anniversary Gala in New York

New York—The American Academy in Berlin’s 25th Anniversary Gala, on April 9, 2024, offered a rare occasion to gather in celebration of three luminaries and to reavow the shared transatlantic values that they and the Academy represent.

Honorees included philanthropist and Academy trustee **Marina Kellen French**, who has worked tirelessly to ensure the vitality and relevance of several revered cultural institutions on both sides of the Atlantic; visual artist, Academy trustee and alumna **Julie Mehretu**, whose work is internationally celebrated for its handling of profound themes of revolt, migration and exile; and former Italian Prime Minister and European Central Bank President **Mario Draghi**, whose leadership during the global financial crisis has been justly acclaimed for helping save the Eurozone.

More than 250 guests attended the black-tie fundraising event at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Proceeds will directly support the Academy’s core programming; advance its hallmark scholarship, creativity, and transatlantic engagement; and ensure a brilliant start to the next twenty-five years.

Daniel Benjamin, president of the American Academy in Berlin, said: “Our founders ardently believed in fostering a robust alliance of democratic nations, not only through political and military collaboration, but also through the unifying forces of learning and the arts. ... This conviction is stronger than ever as we navigate contemporary global challenges, witnessing a strengthening of the US-German relationship and a powerful reaffirmation of the Atlantic Alliance—in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine, now in its third year. ... Amidst the formidable challenges of our time, collaboration and exchange are imperative. It is our fervent belief that through dialogue and shared inquiry, we can surmount these challenges and forge a path towards a brighter future.”

The **American Academy in Berlin** is an institution of advanced scholarship and practice in the social sciences, humanities, arts, and public policy. It was founded in Berlin in 1994 just after the Cold War ended by a group of prominent Americans and Germans, among them then-US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, statesmen Henry Kissinger and Richard von Weizsäcker, and historian Fritz Stern. Its flagship program is the Berlin Prize Fellowship, a residency awarded each year to circa 24 scholars, artists, writers, public policy experts, composers, and journalists from the United States. **The Academy hosted its first class of fellows in 1998, thus we celebrate our 25th anniversary this 2023-24 academic year.** Fellows spend a semester in the Academy’s residential community at the Hans Arnhold Center, a historic villa on the Wannsee. Here, the Academy also hosts a series of events with Distinguished Visitors, who engage with German leaders and the public on issues of shared concern, including global politics, international security, economics, technology, public health, and more.

*Photos are available for download [here](#) (Password: aab1998).
For more information on who took part in this event, please visit [our website](#).*

Press Manager:
Kristen Allen
kra@americanacademy.de
+49 (30) 804 83 252