

# sinne.formen



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*Dear Readers,*

*I hope you enjoyed your summer! For the new first-graders, starting school marks the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. They leave behind familiar ground and join new communities. Larger groups of kindergarten classmates very rarely move on to school together, so in the early stages building relationships is much more important than any educational content. This is where children truly learn "something for life"—as the philosopher Martin Buber so beautifully put it, "All real living is meeting."*

*That's why, in this issue, we're taking a look at the quality of meeting. Digitization may be a blessing in terms of work-facilitating technologies and resource-saving cooperation, but it simply cannot replace true human contact. But what exactly do we mean when we talk about the art of meeting?*

*Art also leads us on to our last article. The last calendar from our project with Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences went into production at the same time as this issue, this time dedicated to the color red. What is it that links color qualities with a better world? Read more in our article "Heartwork." I'm very thankful that I was able to recruit Konstantin Behr from among the students to illustrate this issue of sinne.formen. With his glazing technique, he beautifully demonstrates how even our colored pencils have great depth. On that note, we are still looking for illustrators to work with us long-term.*

*Kind regards,*

*Inke Kruse*

# From “me” to “you”

“All real living is meeting.”

(Martin Buber)

Our partner meet-ups take place every three years and are a central meeting point for us. Among other things, we use the time spent together to tackle any mutual topics as a group.

What does the here and now demand of us? And how can we constantly develop a form of organization in line with our philosophy, on a worldwide scale and in diverse conditions? What value do meetings have in this, and what exactly do we mean by “the art of meeting one another”?

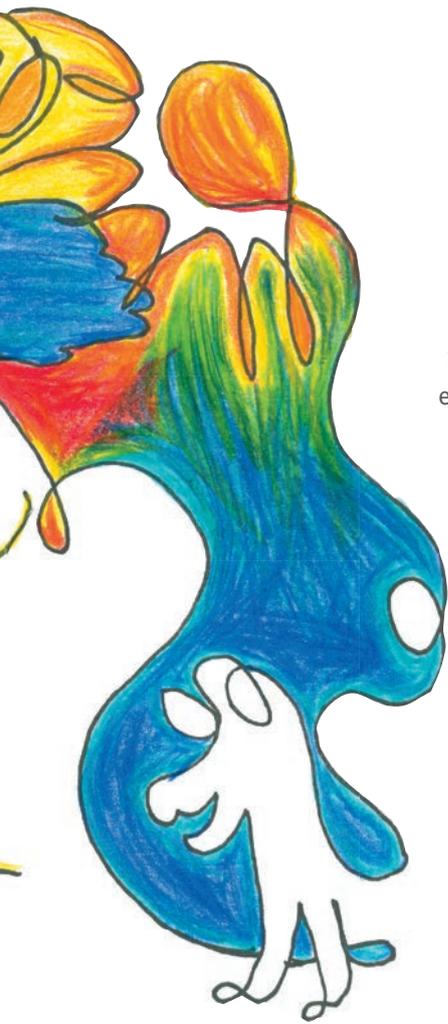
As part of a global organization, I’m very thankful for the abundant possibilities offered by digital exchange. But where does the desire for the real come from in our professional lives, too?

Networks are connections. They can be “... the flock that picks us up if we fall out of the nest or our role ....”

\* So-called social networks appear to be actually more of a distant echo of this community. Emojis are no substitute for facial expressions and body language. Fake news stories haunt the web, while chatbots would have us believe we are communicating with a human counterpart. How can we ascertain what is real and true?



INSiGHTS



Digital communication tools improve speedy exchange and productivity, and make it easier to work with partners. But we don't use digital exchange simply because it exists.

We use it because it adds something to our existence. Yet for the most part we're moving within our function, within our role. The longing for the real is the longing for something (inter)personal. Our sensory perception is at the very center of this—even if we aren't always conscious of it. We can't "smell each other," a topic "touches" us, a position "isn't to our taste."

We don't just aspire to put sensory perception at the forefront in all of our products; it should also be allowed to be pivotal to our encounters.

Even on social networks there is now a tendency to "downsize spaces," to move towards the private sphere (closed groups), and not least towards meeting *in real life* ("irl"). For example, the world's largest neighborhood app, Nextdoor, is structured similarly to Facebook, but helps foster a sense of community in members' real living locations. Topics, questions, and worries are tackled as a collective, events are organized or, like in Chicago recently, people fight to save the florist's around the corner. Studies show that personal involvement with the local community has a particularly positive effect on mental well-being.

Community only comes about if individual personal gain and egos aren't allowed to take center stage. The word "for" plays a central role in the community—for a cause, for a topic, for one another. A partnership of convenience in the very best sense of the term. The art of meeting lies in the investment and the participation of everyone. In the ability to pull back where necessary, but also to weigh in again. "True meeting can only take place in dialog on an equal footing." (Martin Buber)

\* Sabine Froning, CEO of Communication Works (consultancy on community-building in organizations and companies) and founder of the first women's network in the energy sector

## PROSPeCTS



# Heartwork



The words for “blood” and “red” have the same origin in Hebrew. We associate vibrancy, life, warmth, and love with the color red. But it also represents the emotions at the other end of the scale—hate, violence, and destruction.

In the third issue of our annual calendar series on the primary colors, students from Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences focused on the entire spectrum of red, traced its effects, and explored its boundaries. The central question regarding the diversity and multidimensionality of the color was: “When is red self-sufficient?” \*

At this point, we would like to focus on the color’s connection to the heart. Red needs the balance between calm and storm, power and devotion, passivity and activity. In fact, it behaves in a very similar way to a healthy heart. In Chinese medicine, a pulse that is too regular or blood pressure that is entirely constant are more likely to indicate illness. Our heart requires flare-ups as much as drops. But red also needs space, as shown by the studies for the calendar. On the surface it looks like a “gaping wound”—it has to be able to expand, sometimes even over the edges.

**\* Let us know why you love red or when you “see red.” Everyone who sends in an answer will be entered into our raffle, with ten lucky winners receiving a calendar dedicated to the color red. We look forward to receiving your messages at [info@stockmar.de](mailto:info@stockmar.de)!**

## ART & MOre

Just as the color red needs an opposite, contact, and friction to display its full radiance, the power of our heart also needs to be able to get out of hand. In encounters, exchanges, conflicts, in love. Seen in this way, our heart is never self-sufficient. In overcoming that which separates us from one another we arrive at a culture of the heart. “The heart becomes the place from which future energies radiate out into the world—when our actions become genuine ‘heartwork.’” (Jelle van der Meulen)



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