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UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG
UNIVERSITÄT FREIBURG



The Artist's Name: Identity, Authorship and Legal Protection

20 May 2026, 14:00 – 18:00

salle de cinéma, MIS 2029, Université de Fribourg
Avenue de l'Europe 20, 1700 Fribourg

The Artist's Name: Identity, Authorship and Legal Protection

This conference explores the many dimensions of the artist's name – its historical emergence, conceptual significance, and legal protection in today's art world. Bringing together perspectives from art history, philosophy, and law, the programme examines how artistic identity is constructed, expressed, and safeguarded across time and disciplines.

From the earliest practices of signing works and asserting authorship to contemporary artistic engagements with branding and trademarks, the talks highlight the evolving role of the artist's name as both a marker of identity and a vehicle of value. The programme also broadens the perspective beyond the visual arts by addressing the artwork as an object of philosophical inquiry, exploring questions of identity, existence, and aesthetic experience in the context of music.

The legal dimension forms a central thread throughout the afternoon, addressing the increasing importance of the artist's name as an economic and reputational asset. Particular attention is given to the protection under copyright and trademark law, as well as to the practical challenges faced by artists and art professionals in navigating brand preservation in a globalised market.

By combining historical insight, theoretical reflection, and legal analysis, the conference offers a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the significance of the artist's name in both cultural and legal contexts.

PROGRAMME

13.45 - 14.00

Welcome of the participants

14.00 - 14.15

Opening remarks

Prof. JACQUES DUBEY, Dean of the Law Faculty, University of Fribourg

14.15 - 14.45

The Signature as Claim: A Historical Perspective on Artists and Branding

Dr. NICOLAS GALLEY, Director of Studies, EMAMS, University of Zurich & Lecturer, Department of Art History and Archeology, University of Fribourg

14.45 - 15.30

Artists Incorporating Trademarks in Their Works

Prof. NOAM ELCOTT, Associate Professor of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University, New York

Coffee break

16.00 - 16.30

The Artwork as Object: Identity, Existence, and Aesthetic Experience in Music

Prof. EDWARD M. SWIDERSKI, Department of Philosophy, University of Fribourg

16.30 - 16.50

Protecting the Artist's Name: Copyright, Trademarks and Beyond

Dr. ANNE LAURE BANDLE, Attorney-at-law and lecturer, Law Faculty, University of Fribourg

16.50 - 17.15

Artists and Trademarks: Navigating Brand Protection in the Art World

Dr. KARIN LOREZ, Legal advisor and entrepreneur

17.15

Closing remarks and apéro

REGISTRATION

Please register online: www.sf-fs.ch/de/veranstaltungen

The **participation fees** are

- for members of the UniFr: CHF 20.–
- for members of SF-FS and Art Law Foundation: CHF 100.–
- for non-members: CHF 150.–
- for students and doctoral students: free of charge (please send a copy of your student ID to: info@sf-fs.ch)

You can become a member (www.sf-fs.ch/de/mitgliedschaft) and pay less immediately.

We look forward to your participation.

Artwork: Chat GPT, prompt and modifications A. Früh.

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