

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Berlin 6.12.2011
PRESS RELEASE

DAHLEM MUSEUMS

Museum of European Cultures – National Museums in Berlin Arnimallee 25, 14195 Berlin-Dahlem

Opening times Tue - Fri 10 am - 6 pm, Sat - Sun 11 am - 6 pm

Invitation to a Press Conference held on Tuesday December 6, 2011, 11 am, at the foyer in Arnimallee 25

Reopening of the Museum of European Cultures – National Museums in Berlin, in the Bruno Paul Building

Opening: Thur. December 8, 2011, 7 pm, foyer Arnimallee 25

Dear Sir or Madam.

The Museum of European Cultures in Berlin Dahlem dedicates itself to lifeworlds in Europe and European cultural contacts from the 18thcentury to the present. Following 2 years of refurbishment, the museum will now be reopening on December 9, 2011, with three newly designed exhibitions.

These include the museum's permanent exhibition looking into "Cultural Contacts – Living in Europe", a special exhibit entitled "Explorations in Europe. Visual Studies in the 19thCentury", and a study collection where various groups of objects from the holdings of the Museum of European Cultures – National Museums in Berlin will be put on display in regularly changing exhibitions.

With approximately 275,000 original objects, the museum houses one of the largest European collections documenting everyday culture and the popular arts. The themes are meanwhile as varied as the cultures of Europe themselves: from wedding customs to remembrance of the dead, from the cult around Napoleon toHalloween, music in Sardinia, masked processions in the Alps, ...

The Museum of European Cultures was created in 1999 by merging the Museum of Folklore, 110 years old at the time, with the European department of the then Museum of Ethnology.

We would herewith like to invite you to a press preview taking place at our new premises on Tuesday December 6, 2011, at 11 am.

You will be greeted by

KonradVanja

Director of the Museum of European Cultures

Elisabeth Tietmeyer

Curator, Associate Director of the Museum of European Cultures **Irene Ziehe**

Curator, Research Associate of the Museum of European Cultures

We would be delighted to welcome you at our press conference on 6.12.2011. If you wish to attend the official opening, which will be held in the evening of December 8, 2011, please let us know by email to: presse@smb.spk-berlin.de

With best regards p.p. Anne Schäfer-Junker GENERALDIREKTION
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Reopening of the Museum of European Cultures – National Museums in Berlin, at the Bruno Paul Building

Cultural Contacts – Living in Europe

In its new permanent exhibition "Cultural Contacts. Living in Europe", the museum will be showing excerpts from its varied collections in four rooms with a total floor area of 700 square meters.

The show thematizes current discussions surrounding social movements and divisions: the in the broadest sense mobile behaviour of people within and to Europe on the one hand brings about cultural encounters and commonalities, which can lead to the emergence of global cultures. On the other it raises questions concerning the consequences for the identity of individuals and groups wishing to counter losses, or the fear of them, by drawing boundaries.

Regarding these topics we present significant objects with varied functions, in various materials, and from different periods, within a European comparison. A splendid Venetian gondola meanwhile serves as a "guiding object" which addresses all the aspects of the exhibition.

Explorations in Europe. Visual Studies in the 19thCentury

Special exhibition at the Museum of European Cultures from December 9, 2011, to April 8, 2012.

This temporary exhibition picks up on the subject of the permanent show, cultural encounters, in two rooms with a total floor space of 400 square meters

The encounters concerned here are journeys undertaken by artists and scientists in the 19th century with the intention of exploring and familiarizing themselves with unknown lifeworlds. Besides collecting three-dimensional, authentic objects, they would also document this in pictures, photographs or true-to-scale architectural models. The oil paintings and miniature buildings created by Berlin painter Wilhelm Kiesewetter, who travelled northern and eastern Europe for 14 years in the mid-19thcentury, are a vivid example of this.

Photography was still in its infancy then, but developed quickly so that true-to-detail drawings and paintings soon came to be replaced by scientific photography. Scientists of the Berlin Society for Ethnology, Anthropology and Prehistory such as Rudolf Virchow, founder of the Museum of European Culture's precursor institute, particularly distinguished themselves in this respect. Not satisfied with merely researching other cultures, the scientists and artists concerned also tried to introduce their findings to a broader audience by means of exhibitions, publications and lectures. The **study collection**, which is being presented to the public for the very first time, echoes this approach by displaying exhibits in cultural comparison. From December 9, 2011, it will be showing various kinds of **toys** from the museum's rich holdings documenting the culture of childhood.

Museum of European Cultures – National Museums in Berlin

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