

**Wrocław–Berlin 2016
European neighbours**

Press release

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Wroclaw-Berlin 2016

In 2016, the long-time European neighbours Wrocław and Berlin will be at the centre of a number of events and projects organised by partners working in the fields of culture, politics, business and science. The active involvement of the general public in both cities and their common experience throughout the 2016 European Capital of Culture in Wrocław will also serve to expand opportunities for closer cooperation even further.

Initiators:

Stiftung Zukunft Berlin
Wrocław 2016 –
European Capital of Culture

Cooperation Partners:

Hewlett Packard Enterprise
Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH
German Federal Cultural Foundation
Luneta
Mediapool GmbH
Mica Moca project berlin e.V.

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LOTTO-Foundation Berlin
Municipality of Wrocław

Berlin, 2 February 2016. While Wrocław is the 2016 European Capital of Culture together with San Sebastian in Spain, Berlin was and continues to be Germany's capital of culture. The Wrocław-Berlin programme will reflect the meeting-points of these two creative cities and vibrant societies. Indeed, cultural and artistic exchange between Berlin and Wrocław has never been as intense as it is today, nor have business ties ever been as close. And yet, what exactly connects these two cities that are so different in both size and appearance? What social parallels are there? What effect have various factors – such as migration, flight and displacement but also the wave of freedom after 1989 – had on these two societies?

In 2016, we celebrate not only Wrocław as a European Capital of Culture, but also the 25th anniversary of the German-Polish Border Treaty and the city partnership between Berlin and Warsaw. The independent, Berlin-based forum for civic responsibility known as Stiftung Zukunft Berlin has joined with Wrocław – European Capital of Culture and other partners drawn from culture, politics, business, science and sport to take advantage of this opportunity to showcase the deep-rooted and ongoing relationship between Wrocław and Berlin. "Our projects focus on neighbourly relations, new ideas, common historical similarities and those enmities we've been lucky enough to overcome. We also take a special look at singular displays of humanity, for example as shown by Wrocław's Cardinal Boleslaw Kominek. We emphasise our mutual influences, common relationships and, most importantly, the future of people in both cities," explains **Dr. Reinhard Schweppe**, former German Ambassador in Poland and head of Stiftung Zukunft Berlin's "Neighbours in Europe" initiative.

The Wrocław – Berlin 2016 European Neighbours project reflects the close relationship in a number of projects and events set to be carried out in both cities, including the LUNETTA installation and the In Between Festivals.

"After our successful launch in Wroclaw, we are delighted that so many European neighbours – and Berlin in particular – are working to support the European Capital of Culture with a number of cooperation projects", notes **Dr. Katarzyna Mlynczak-Sachs**, International Relations Manager of the European Capital of Culture Wroclaw 2016. Starting in February, several Berlin-based partners will be organising a wide range of exhibitions, concerts, films and roundtable discussions.

In Between Festivals, 17 February to December 2016

The event series known as the In Between Festivals will showcase creative collaborations between Berlin and Wroclaw with a number of artistic encounters in the fields of dance, performance and Jazz. Over 30 groups active in the independent art and culture scene will present monthly performances.

LUNETETA, 9 May to 3 July 2016

Over the course of two months, the interactive work-of-art known as LUNETETA will create a real-time connection between the two cities of Berlin and Wroclaw. In walk-in installations set up at central sites in both Berlin and Wroclaw, visitors will be invited to experience the connections and forms of communication in our present, history and future. Visitors to both cities will come into direct contact, i.e. image and sound data will be broadcast using Internet-based streaming technology.

Further events on the calendar of Wroclaw-Berlin 2016 include the following: the exhibition focusing on **Boleslaw Kominek** at the Berlin House of Representatives, (29 Feb – 8 April), the **Kulturzug** (Culture Train) with which the federal states of Berlin and Brandenburg will once again take up a direct connection between Berlin and Wroclaw (starting 30 April), the **IHK Conference** (9 May), the **photo exhibition "Gesichter einer Stadt"** ("Faces of a City", opens 9 May), the **Berliner "Wroclaw Edition" club night** (May 2016), **"Summer Rental"** – The Marx Collection of Hamburger Bahnhof hosted in Wroclaw, (August 2016), **the film project "Wir sind Juden aus Breslau"** ("We are Jews from Wroclaw", 6. Nov., Wroclaw /9. Nov. Berlin) and the **European Film Awards** (December 2016).

The full programme will be available from 16 March at www.wroclaw.berlin and www.wroclaw.berlin
Event organisers with programme content relating to the Berlin-Wroclaw theme can write to breslau@kulturprojekte-berlin.de.

Berlin and Wroclaw have encountered one another many times in history. Both were members of the Hanseatic League and experienced their first economic Golden Age in the late Middle Ages. After that, the cities were strongly connected to one another for centuries. The urban communities of both cities have been shaped throughout history by the forces of migration. The deep cuts that occurred in 1945 have since largely healed. The cities already share a geographic location, membership in the European Union and many common values and interests; in turn, these open up opportunities to achieve a new quality in neighbourly relations. For example, both cities were – albeit in different eras – centres of German-speaking literature. Also, roughly 120 years ago, the group of avant-garde architects around Hans Scharoun, Erich Mendelsohn, Hans Poelzig and Max Berg worked in both cities on buildings still found there today. Music has also played a major role since the very beginning; this year will mark the opening of the new Music Forum in Wroclaw with over 2,000 seats. The Jazz scene, too, is experiencing a blossoming of artistic exchange. In the past several years, Wroclaw has also increasingly made a name for itself as a centre of film.

The following partners are among those participating in the Wroclaw-Berlin 2016 city events with their own contributions and projects:

Berlin House of Representatives, Federal Foreign Office, Bente Kahan Foundation, Polish Embassy in Berlin, Clubcommission Berlin e.V., Club der Polnischen Versager, Convivium Berlin e.V., German Consulate Wroclaw, German-Polish Jugendwerk, German-Polish Science Foundation (DPWS), German Cultural Forum Eastern Europe, Die Mitte e.V., Europa Forum Wroclaw, European Film Academy, Goethe Institute, IHK Berlin, Mica Moca e.V., Jewish Community of Wroclaw, Kino Nowe Horyzonty, Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH, Museum Narodowe we Wroclawiu, Luneta e.V., Oppenheim House Wroclaw, Polish Cultural Institute, Robert Bosch Foundation, Stowarzyszenie Monopol Warszawski, visitBerlin, Womak Holding, and many more

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