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Top Events 2009/10: From Fall of the Wall to Bauhaus and Oberammergau Passion Play

Germany looks forward to two very special years that promise interesting events, great new attractions and special anniversaries. Just in time for the New Year the highly anticipated new Porsche museum in Stuttgart opens its doors in December 2008. Weimar then jumps into the action with the 90th anniversary of the Bauhaus movement; Leipzig and Halle celebrate their famous composers Mendelssohn, Schumann and Handel with international top-class concerts. Essen and the Ruhr Region transform into the European Capital of Culture in 2010, while the world famous Oktoberfest turns 200 and the decennial Oberammergau Passion Play takes place for the 41st time.

New Museum for Porsche, Stuttgart

Just in time for 2009, the construction of the new Porsche Museum will be finished in December 2008 and it will open its brand new doors in 2009. The ambitious project is the central place that consolidates both historic and contemporary knowledge about everything concerning Porsche and makes it accessible to the public. In addition to a spacious exhibition area for the presentation of fascinating vehicles, both Porsche AG's historic archive and a Classic Workshop will be located in the new museum. The architecture of the new building echoes the principles of the Porsche architecture, which symbolizes the character of the company and faithfully reflects its authentic achievements and products at the same time. Its unique shape has been chosen deliberately to set the museum apart from the typical Porsche Centres. > www.porsche.com

Bauhaus 90th Anniversary in Weimar, Jena and Erfurt

A design revolution began 90 years ago - in the town of Weimar in Thuringia. The Bauhaus, arguably the most important and most influential school of design of the 20th century, was founded by Walter Gropius in 1919 in Weimar. The style became one of the most influential currents in Modernist architecture worldwide. Architects and designers such as its founder and leaders Walter Gropius, Mies van Rohe or their followers including Helmut Jahn influenced and changed the style of aesthetics and design not only in Germany, but around the world. Famous national landmarks on both sides of the Atlantic such as the Seagram and PanAM building in New York, the One Liberty Place in Philadelphia and the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin are testament to their influence and lasting legacy. > germanoriginality.com

In 2009, impressive exhibitions and outstanding events will take place in Weimar, Jena and Erfurt, for example the exhibition of sculptures and paintings by the famous Bauhaus artists such as Kandinsky, Klee and Itten from March 28th to May 7th in the New Museum in Weimar. > www.weimar.de

The anniversary celebrations also will come to New York's Museum of Modern Arts in November 2009 with the exhibition "Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity." This retrospective, presented in collaboration with a consortium of the three Bauhaus collections in Germany (Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin; Stiftung Bauhaus Dessau; and Klassik Stiftung Weimar), is the first comprehensive treatment of the Bauhaus at MoMA since 1938. > moma.org

Fall of the Wall - 20th Anniversary from Berlin to Leipzig

The Fall of the Wall in 1989 moved the world. The peaceful revolution in Eastern Germany and the following Reunification are historically unique. The events twenty years ago triggered a dynamic change in Germany that is reflected throughout the country. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of "The Fall of the Wall" cities from Berlin to Leipzig celebrate with special festivals, exhibitions, tours, unusual deals and events. Please see accompanying Press Release for more information or go to www.cometogermany.com.

Halle Highlight: 250th anniversary of Handel

George Frideric Handel, in German Georg Friedrich Haendel, represents the ultimate in baroque musical achievement. Born in Halle in 1685 he enjoyed an international career that took him first to Italy, then to England. In 2009, Halle honors its most famous son with a special day and its annual prestigious international Handel Festival. One particular highlight of the Handel Year 2009 festivities will be April 19th when more than 40 radio stations in the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) will air concerts from their cities on this day. Halle, as the birthplace of Handel, will open this day with a concert from the Marktkirche, the church where the composer was christened. The Handel Festival starts on June 4th in Halle. For ten days world renowned musicians and orchestras play the masterpieces in historical settings. www.sachsen-anhalt-tourismus.de

Leipzig celebrates Mendelssohn's 200th Anniversary

Leipzig celebrates in 2009 the 200th birthday of its famous son Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. The famous composer was born and worked in the East German city as one of the most influential artists of the 19th century. The annual Mendelssohn Festival takes place from August 21st to September 18th 2009 in the Leipziger Gewandhaus, the concert hall where Mendelssohn himself staged his masterpieces. Visitors can also discover Mendelssohn's personal history in the unique museum Mendelssohn Haus. www.leipzig.de

2010: Oberammergau's 41st Passion Play

For the 41st time the Bavarian village of Oberammergau will celebrate the Passion Play in 2010. This event has taken place every ten years since its first enactment in 1633. More than 2000 Oberammergauers, actors, singers, instrumentalists and stage technicians bring to the stage those events Christianity regards as its central source of life and hope in approximately six hours of playing time. More than 500,000 visitors from all over the world and tens of thousands of Americans will be part of this unique religious event from May 15th to October 3rd 2010. www.oberammergau.de

European Capital of Culture RUHR.2010

Essen and the Ruhr Region in western Germany will be the "European Cultural Capital 2010." For the first time in this European competition the Cultural Capital is not an individual city, but a whole region with Essen as the standard-bearer. The industrial Ruhr region is Germany's highest populated area and especially exciting for its postindustrial transformation. The project "European Capital of Culture RUHR.2010" addresses the transformation along the lines of art, immigration and urbanization with fascinating exhibitions, events and workshops. en.kulturhauptstadt-europas.de

Old industrial spaces are reinvented as cultural and art spaces. The leading example is Shaft XII of the former Zollverein pit. It was built between 1928 and 1932 by Fritz Schupp and Martin Kremmer, the leading industrial architects in the Ruhrgebiet at that time. The site was designed in the Bauhaus style and was regarded not only as the most modern but also the most beautiful colliery in the world. Today a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it was converted in 2001 by Sir Norman Foster into a vibrant artistic center, hosting the Zollverein Museum, the North-Rhine Westphalian Design Center (Red Dot Museum) in the old boiler house, the Zollverein "Art Shaft", and the hands-on exploration "Senso-rama." www.zollverein.de

Discover the fascinating projects such as the Industrial Heritage Trail, a 400 kilometer long circular route around the Ruhr Region, which opens up the region's industrial heritage to visitors. Twenty-five so-called anchor points make up the core network of the Trail, including six important museums of technical and social history, many panorama points and a series of significant workers' settlements. www.route-industriekultur.de

200 years of Oktoberfest

In 2010, the world's most famous beer festival, the Oktoberfest in Munich, celebrates its 200th anniversary. It took place the first time in 1810 as a festival honoring the marriage of Crown Prince Ludwig (later King Ludwig I) and Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen. The festival grounds Theresienwiesen were named after her. The Oktoberfest, or "Wiesn" as it is called in Bavaria, started out as a horse race. A parade was added in the following years and at the end of the 19th century local brewers opened their beer tents. Today it is a mass festival, attracting every year millions of visitors from all over the world with Bavarian music, food and of course beer. www.oktoberfest.de

Robert Schumann - 200th Anniversary in Leipzig

Only one year after Mendelssohn, Leipzig celebrates another famous citizens; the 200th birthday of Robert

Schumann. Many concerts will be dedicated to his works, featuring solo concertos, symphonies, piano works, and song-cycles. Without Schumann, 20th-century music would be quite different. The fusion of radical subjectivity and mastery of form, and his characteristic modernity and individuality has inspired and influenced many composers who came after him. ▶ www.schumann-verein.de (German only)

Preparing to Celebrate 500 Years of Luther's Reformation

With an eye to the future, Germany already prepares for a very special event in the year 2017 when 500 years ago the Reformation started in Wittenberg. What had begun with the hammering of the 95 Theses to the church door has inspired people all over the world. Today, 400 million worldwide are seeing their Protestant roots in the event that has happened in the Luther city. This anniversary is named "Luther 2017 - 500 years Reformation" and is celebrated by Wittenberg and all other cities in Germany that have relations with Luther and the Reformation. ▶ www.cometogermany.com

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