

PRESS RELEASE
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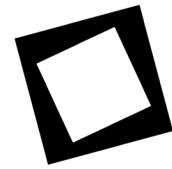
Fundraising promise met € 105 million to rebuild palace façades – Federal President Steinmeier thanks all donors

The fundraising target was reached just in time for completion and before the large new cultural centre was opened. The Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss (Humboldt Forum Foundation at the Berlin Palace) and the Förderverein Berliner Schloss e.V. (Association of Friends of the Berlin Palace) are to thank all donors for their generous civic commitment with an exclusive live broadcast from the Berliner Schloss Humboldt Forum. The fact that it has been possible to rebuild the palaces' baroque façades in the centre of the capital of Germany is mainly and largely due to the tireless efforts of Wilhelm von Boddien, the Managing Director at the Förderverein Berliner Schloss e. V.

It was not certain for a long time whether it would be possible to keep the promise that Wilhelm von Boddien had made to the German Bundestag before its historic vote on this construction project in 2002: To restore the Berliner Schloss with its baroque exterior façades and the Schlüterhof to their original condition. Von Boddien promised to raise € 80 million from private donors to this end. As a result of the winning design for the international architectural competition held in 2008, which was won by architect Franco Stella from Italy, an additional € 25 million needed to be raised because, besides the façades, the new design also included the restoration of the second, third and fourth interior portals and their passageways along with the complete reconstruction of the dome. This promise has been successfully fulfilled with total funds to the tune of € 105 million being raised.

Johannes Wien, Chairman of the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss:
“One thing has become clear as the Berliner Schloss as the Humboldt Forum is being completed: All of the palace's façades were entirely financed from private donations. That means that the public no longer needs to fear that tax-payer's money is being used for the historical façades. The support association and foundation have already raised € 105 million. I'd like to thank the 45,000 people who made donations for this great achievement! They were given the exclusive opportunity to be the first to view and take possession of 'their' palace in a two-hour live broadcast that was streamed from the centre of Berlin on the first weekend of Advent. And I thank Wilhelm von Boddien, without whom none of this would have been possible.”

Wilhelm von Boddien, Managing Director at Berliner Schloss e.V. “We did it! We are planning to complete the work on the palace with the elements that are retrofittable at any



time which had initially been put on hold. These are primarily the remaining balustrade figures that will crown the palace portals and the dome as well as the fourth passage where the digital celebration of donors is located. Additional fundraising targets have been set for the first and fourth portal passages and finally for the continued restoration of the magnificent pilaster spring and summer herms in the fifth portal at the pleasure garden.” The Förderverein Berliner Schloss e.V. now requires an additional € 7.5 million to complete this work.

Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier thanked all those who donated in a video message.

“I’d like to thank all of you who donated and whose generosity made it possible to rebuild the Berliner Stadtschloss; as a consequence, it has been possible with the Humboldt Forum to establish a unique institution for Berlin, for Germany, for visitors from across the globe that will create a place for the cultures of the world and enable them to enter into ever deeper cultural dialogue and exchange.”

In her message, **Minister of State for Culture Monika Grütters** paid tribute to the donors’ commitment and looked to the future of the Humboldt Forum.

The Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss originally wanted to express its sincere thanks to all those who gave by staging a grand celebration in the completed new building. The corona pandemic had unfortunately made that impossible. That’s why the foundation has organised an exclusive thank-you event on the Internet for all donors – and that includes you – at www.spendertage.de; the special access **password is Spendertage2020. That’s where you’ll find press photos and the video messages.**

The tighter corona restrictions also mean that the opening year will not be commencing as planned on 17 December. In its place there will be a live stream and an online guided tour with a digital presentation of the building and the Humboldt Forum’s offerings from 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 16 December 2020. It won’t be possible to open the already completed exhibitions that showcase the site’s history or the *Nimm Platz! (Take a seat!)* presentations prepared for early January. An exhibition for children, *Nach der Natur* (Based on Nature) by the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin, and *BERLIN GLOBAL*, a co-production between Kulturprojekte Berlin and the Stadtmuseum Berlin. The Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss and all those involved from the institution are now hoping – as are all other museum and cultural institutions – that it won’t be too long before they’re able to welcome visitors back. The timing will depend on how the pandemic develops and the political decisions taken as a result.

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