

Theme year 2009 – 20 years since the fall of the Wall

Domino Action on 9 November 2009

Young people, students and trainees are being called upon to take part in the Domino Action during the Festival of Freedom on 9 November. As of 18 March, they can design more than one thousand over-sized domino tiles, focusing on the theme of '20 years since the fall of the Wall'. With their domino tiles, these young people will play an important part in the emotional highlight of the year – a major celebration with the Domino Effect at the Festival of Freedom at the Brandenburg Gate.

This year is all about the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Domino Action running up to 9 November sees the start of another major long-term project in the theme year. It is aimed particularly at young people who have not experienced this most recent past, but are aware of it and are interested in the history. Parents, grandparents, teachers, friends and relatives are contemporary witnesses in their own circles and they can tell stories of the Wall and its inhumanity. In Berlin, the Wall ran through the heart of the city and many people on both sides still have vivid memories of those evocative weeks in the autumn of 1989, of the Peaceful Revolution and the final, liberating fall of the Wall.

The governing mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit, launched the Domino Action on 18 March in front of the Brandenburg Gate with the call "BE THERE! Make history with Domino Effect". When the earth shattering events of 20 years ago are remembered at the Festival of Freedom on 9 November, the installation of the over-sized domino tiles will be an emotional highlight – the Domino Effect at the most famous symbol of Berlin.

The event will involve thousands of young people who, in the coming months, will have the opportunity to design domino tiles which reflect their personal analysis of the theme. For the launch of the project on 18 March, a new youth-oriented Internet presentation was shown at www.mauerfall09.de/dominoaktion, providing comprehensive information and inviting people to register immediately. As participants in this project in the theme year, the young designers will be important players right up to the grand finale at the 'Festival of Freedom'. The 'domino gallery' will be set up between Potsdamer Platz and the Reichstag building from 7 November. Along a route of around two kilometres, it will provide a presentation space for more than one thousand domino tiles.

Press information

For many people, brave activists and contemporary witnesses of the Peaceful Revolution, the Domino Effect is reminiscent of the end of the 1980s. It was out of the protests of individuals that a resolute, yet completely peaceful, mass movement arose. Overcoming the division led to a further 'domino effect', the impact of which was felt far beyond Germany's borders, bringing change to Europe and the world.

The project will receive an international link from the Goethe Institute, which as a cooperation partner will be responsible for arranging and artistically designing a 'Wall Journey' by the domino tiles to different countries around the world. The tiles will also form part of the events at the Brandenburg Gate on 9 November. This will be a unique and exciting finale to the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Wall in the German capital. Several of the Goethe Institute's tiles will later be exhibited at the *Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* in Bonn and the Forum of Contemporary History in Leipzig.

The first Berlin companies have expressed their interest in a painting project for their trainees. The corporate partners in the Domino Action may participate as domino sponsors, telling their history on the domino. For many companies, the fall of the Wall was a new beginning, in Germany and the German capital. This period still links people today and '20 years since the fall of the Wall' is an opportunity both to draw a line under events and to look forward to Berlin's future.

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