

75th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Nuremberg Trials

20 November, 2020, marks the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Nuremberg Trials. At the same time, the Memorium Nuremberg Trials celebrates its tenth anniversary. Several projects are dedicated to the historical event of the Trial, looking at it from very different perspectives. Due to the current pandemic, they will mainly be happening in digital space. The centrepiece of the programme will be a commemorated act on Friday, 20 November, 2020, at 7 p.m. in Court Room 600, the historic venue of the trial. Guest of honour will be Federal President, Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

On 20 November, 1945, for the first time in history, leading representatives of a state had to answer to an international tribunal for the crimes they had committed. On this day, the “Trial of the Major War Criminals” of 21 high-ranking representatives of the Nazi state was opened in Nuremberg Palace of Justice. The military tribunal comprised representatives of the four Allied Powers – the USA, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France. The “Trial of the Century” lasted just under a year, and on 1 October ended with 12 death sentences, three life sentences and four long-term prison sentences, as well as three acquittals. The “Nuremberg Follow-up Trials” followed, ending on 14 April, 1949. These trials mark the beginning of the criminal prosecution of Nazi crimes which has lasted until this day.

On 20 November, 2020, the Memorium Nuremberg Trials will also celebrate its 10th anniversary. By opening the Memorium in 2010, the City of Nuremberg added an important element to its culture of remembrance, dealing with the crimes of the Nazi regime. This institution sees itself not mainly as a place for dealing with Nazi history, but as a place where world history was written. With the idea of the supremacy of law over power, the Nuremberg Trial of the Main War Criminals opened up a pioneering way of dealing with war crimes and crimes against humanity which has raised great hope and expectations to this day.

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Unlike hardly any other place, Nuremberg stands for the application of law both as a means of suppression and as an instrument of the rule of law. As the place where the “Nuremberg (Racial) Laws” were proclaimed in 1935, the City has remained firmly linked to this creation of a pseudo-legal basis for robbing minorities of their rights –, but it is also to the restitution of the principles of the rule of law by the Allied Powers after 1945. The Memorium Nuremberg Trials is dedicated to this new start, to the restitution of the rule of law in Germany and to the further development of International Criminal Law.

In spring 2020, Court Room 600, the historical venue of the Nuremberg Trials, was given up as a trial venue by the Bavarian judiciary. The last verdict was handed down here in February. So, for the first time, court room 600 has been disconnected from its original purpose, and can now be developed as a remembrance site. This will safeguard that in future it will be even more readily accessible to visitors from all over the world.

On the occasion of these two anniversaries, the Memorium Nuremberg Trials has planned numerous different projects. Due to the Covid19 pandemic, they will be mainly held in digital space.

Commemorated act on Friday, 20 November 2020, 7 p.m.

A commemorated act will be held in Court Room 600, the historic venue of the Nuremberg Trials. After words of greeting by Nuremberg Lord Mayor, Marcus König, Federal President, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, will deliver a speech. Dr. Markus Söder, Minister President of the Free State of Bavaria, will say words of greeting. There will be video messages by Benjamin Ferencz, eyewitness and former chief prosecutor in the so-called Einsatzgruppen trial, by Dr. Fatou Bensouda, chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court in the Hague, as well as by the four foreign ministers of the former Allied nations: Michael Pompeo (USA), Dominic Raab (Great Britain), Jean-Yves Le Drian (France) und Sergei Lavrov (Russia).

The closing panel discussion will be held with the British lawyer and International criminal lawyer, Prof. Philippe Sands; Prof. Dr. Angelika Nußberger, former vice president at the European Court for Human rights; and Dr. Christophe Eick, head of the legal department of the German foreign office and adviser on international law of the Federal Republic of Germany. The moderator will be Michaela Kolster, head of programmes of the Phoenix TV station.

Due to the current pandemic, the commemorated act will therefore be broadcast via livestream, starting at 7 PM on <https://75jahre-nuernberger-prozesse.de/> as well as www.phoenix.de and broadcast on TV on Sunday, 22. November 2020, at 1 PM on the Phoenix event and documentation channel.



Micro-site for the 75th Anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials

A special micro-site was created for the anniversary, available in German and English language as well as in easy language: <https://75jahre-nuernberger-prozesse.de/>

The micro-site aims at providing a digital platform for the various projects and events for this anniversary. In addition, it facilitates the creation of a digital audience for the various projects and events, since due to the Covid 19 pandemic, they cannot be realised in the usual manner. It also acts as a digital archive of the anniversary programme, both for the museum and the public, making content accessible on a long-term basis.

In addition to detailed information about the individual program elements, the micro-site will provide an overview of the Nuremberg Trials. It will also feature video messages by some of the last eyewitnesses of the Nuremberg Trials whose testimony will be available on the micro-site as 'oral history'. They will be supplemented by conversations with experts on the topic of the Nuremberg Trials. Some of these video messages will be shown during the commemorated act and published on the micro-site afterwards.

Anniversary Publication "That Four Great Nations. 75 Jahre Nürnberger Prozess. 75 Years Nuremberg Trial"

On the occasion of the anniversaries, an anthology will be published in the Nuremberg Municipal Museums series, edited by the Memorium Nuremberg Trials. Authors from the former four allied states and Germany will approach the historic event with different focuses and from various professional backgrounds. The contributions to this the richly illustrated publication will stimulate new ways of seeing and new knowledge: they will focus on the Nuremberg Trials of the Main War Criminals as an outstanding achievement of multilateralism and as a place of international encounter, as well as on the potential of this historic venue as a site for remembrance and learning of worldwide significance.

The volume will be published in November 2020 by Michael Imhof Verlag, as volume 21 of the Nuremberg Municipal Resumes series. It will be bilingual (German and English), comprise hundred and seven pages, and will be available for the price of €12.95, to be ordered directly from the Memorium Nuremberg Trials or bookshops, with the ISBN 978-3-7319-0948-4.



Digital Poetry Slam “Wortstark” (Strong Words) on Thursday, 26 November 2020, at 7:30 PM

Five poets, following the rules of a Poetry Slam, will present their thoughts and poems on the topic of “75 years Nuremberg Trials“. They will look at the importance and topicality today of the Nürnberg Trials, dealing both with historical subjects and with current issues. The moderator will be Michael Jakob, regular moderator of Poetry Slams in Ansbach, Bayreuth, Fürth and Nuremberg.

Due to the current Covid 19 measures, this event will be held entirely in digital space and there will be a livestream on the micro-site at <https://75jahre-nuernberger-prozesse.de/diskutieren/poetry-slam> and on the YouTube channel of Poetry Slam Bayreuth at <https://youtu.be/eAqUu3LChQc>.

Digital Book Launch and Reading on Thursday, 3 December 2020, 7 PM

In a digital book launch, British lawyer and author, Philippe Sands, will introduce his latest work, “The Ratline – Love, Lies and Justice on the Trail of a Nazi Fugitive “. In a conversation with the author, he will also speak about his personal experiences when writing this book. Actress, Katja Riemann, well-known from German films such as “Fack Ju Göhte“ and „Rosenstraße“, will read selected passages from the German translation of this new publication.

“The Ratline” tells the story of SS officer, Otto Wächter, descendant of one of the most distinguished Austrian families. From 1939 onward he was the Nazi governor of Kraków, and from 1942 onwards of Galicia. After 1945, he was wanted by the Allies as a suspected war criminal, but managed to escape.

The story is closely linked to the Nuremberg Trials. Before the trials, the people to be indicted had to be agreed upon – many of the wanted persons could neither be found nor put to trial. It is especially those “non-indicted persons “of Nuremberg who have received little attention so far.

The event will be held in English and German language (conversation with the author in English, reading in German) and will be broadcast digitally on Zoom. In order to participate, it is sufficient to send an email to memorium@stadt.nuernberg.de so that interested persons can be sent a link to the event. It is not necessary to register with Zoom or to download the app.



Exhibition “Sprayed – A Student Project on the 75th Anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials”

Students of the Scharrer Middle School in Nuremberg dealt with questions such as: How relevant are the Nuremberg Trials 75 years after their opening? What do they mean to them personally? In a 2-day workshop with Carlos Lorente of the Graffiti Academy Style Scouts, they “translated” their newly acquired knowledge and experiences into graffiti and sprayed them onto canvas.

The graffiti created during the workshop will be presented in an exhibition in Cube 600. Cube 600 is a former car garage opposite the Memorium Nuremberg Trials which in future will present changing and visiting exhibitions. Because currently, the Memorium is closed, we cannot yet foresee when the exhibition will open.

Note

In the press section of the website for the Memorium Nuremberg Trials, you can find this press release, numerous historical and contemporary photographs as well as the programme schedule, which may all be downloaded.

<https://museen.nuernberg.de/memorium-nuernberger-prozesse/presse/pressebereich/>

If you are particularly interested in the Anniversary Publication, please contact presse-museen@stadt.nuernberg.de requesting an advance copy. This copy may only be used for press purposes and reviews and may not be passed on or published as a whole.

For further information, contact Rebecca Weiß of the Memorium Nuremberg Trials at Tel.: +49(0)9 11 / 2 31-1 08 60 or Nürnberg Municipal Museums press office at +49(0)9 11 / 2 31-54 20.

