

MUSÉES DE LA VILLE DE STRASBOURG

Strasbourg, 30 May 2024

Exhibition “Make way for Gutenberg! A memorial by David d’Angers to promote peaceful coexistence. ”

Musée Historique

From 28 June 2024 to 23 February 2025

Everything you need to know about the Gutenberg monument – erected in Strasbourg in 1840 to mark the 400th anniversary of the invention of printing! Created in a spirit of humanism and friendship between peoples, this monument, a major work by one of the greatest of 19th century French sculptors, extols the benefits of printing in the entire world. Set in the heart of the city, the statue today represents an essential feature of Strasbourg’s heritage, as well as a call for all of us to live together.

By paying tribute to Gutenberg at the end of the 1830s, the municipal authorities wanted to honour the memory of an eminent local figure whose invention had contributed to the emancipation of men and women. A fervent republican, the sculptor David d’Angers (1788-1856) responded to the commission by proposing a politically-minded monument defending humanist values – education of the people, freedom of expression, denunciation of slavery.

The exhibition looks back on the creation of the monument in a context of memorial competition with the German city of Mainz, where Gutenberg was born and died. All of David d’Angers’ preparatory work for the monument has been brought together in Strasbourg for the first time. The exhibition also brings to life the extraordinary industrial procession which marked the unveiling of the monument in June 1840, a high point of popular festivals bringing together international delegations and printers from all over France, as well as the various trades of the city and representatives of the new profession of lithographers. Young people, artisans and workers were the centre of attention. The exhibition is an opportunity to display the rich collections of the Strasbourg Museums that are records of this multitudinous procession – works of art, lithographs, albums of drawings, banners, period models, etc. – some of them specially restored for the occasion,.

Finally the exhibition paints a picture of Place Gutenberg as it is today. From the 19th century, the square has been the scene of significant historical events. It is part of the daily lives of Strasbourg residents, whose continuing relationship with it is analysed in a survey carried out jointly with the University of Strasbourg.

Exhibition Curator : Odile Lassère, Head Curator of the Musée Historique de la Ville de Strasbourg, assisted by Sylviane Hatterer, Nicolas Heissat, Isabelle Bulle and Nicolas Champeaux, Musée Historique de la Ville de Strasbourg

Social anthropology research: Marie Durand, Institute of Ethnology, University of Strasbourg / Interdisciplinary Laboratory in Cultural Studies (LinCS)



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Historical Museum of the City of Strasbourg
2, rue du Vieux-Marché-aux-Poissons, Strasbourg

Admission: €7.5 (concessions: €3.5)

Open Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 6pm, weekdays from 10am to 1pm and from 2pm to 6pm - closed on Mondays

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