

GRIMM

WELT

KASSEL

PRESS RELEASE | Kassel, 7 May 2024

Exhibition opening on 9 May 2024

## »IMAGINARIUM | fascinating – playful – mysterious«

**An exhibition about the artistic world of the theatre of the Forman Brothers and their friends**

**The new temporary exhibition at the GRIMMWELT Kassel with the title IMAGINARIUM offers insights into the extraordinary world of Czech travelling and puppet theatre. The imaginative and mysterious stage sets of the Forman Brothers' theatre and their network of artists resemble fairy tales, transporting the visitors into a fantastic cosmos. The exhibition is aimed specifically at children and families and will open on 8 May 2024 from 4 p.m. with a big circus festival for young and old, including performances by the children's and youth Circus Rambazotti in Kassel.**

The poetic theatre productions of the brothers Matěj and Petr Forman, sons of the famous Czech-American film director Miloš Forman, are known far beyond the borders of the Czech Republic and are performed both in large theatres and in unconventional locations. The theatre collaborates regularly with various artists in the field of stage design and scenery, whose own fantastic works become part of the nomadic concept.

In the GRIMMWELT, a colourful large-scale installation entitled IMAGINARIUM has been created from the stage sets of the theatre and other playful objects by numerous artists. The artistic installations allow one to rediscover the delights of arts and crafts, inviting visitors to be astonished, to try their hand and get creative.

*"The gift of imagination gives us the opportunity to be unique. We focus on the fascination of handcrafted objects. Playfulness and enchantment brought on by simple and beautiful things, the world of theatre, invention, toys, dolls or everyday objects – these are theme and content of our installation,"* says curator Matěj Forman.

With this exhibition project, the GRIMMWELT Kassel intends to become even more attractive to the very young visitors. As the largest exhibition centre in the world on the work and life of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the GRIMMWELT will reposition itself with exciting themes and formats, says Managing Director and Programme Director Jan Sauerwald: *"The IMAGINARIUM is a special exhibition format that stimulates our imagination and re-energizes all kinds of topics in European fairytale*

*and storytelling. I am particularly pleased that the exhibition acts as a large, fantastic playground for children and other visitors. They can try out the exhibits, move them around and play with them. The exhibition IMAGINARIUM is for us also an experiment, aiming to show how exhibition centres can function in the future, with and for visitors of all ages."*

In the entrance hall of the GRIMMWELT, there is a ship called "Geheimnis" (Secret). This installation by the artist Josef Sodomka invites visitors to touch and operate the numerous levers – an interactive feature that continues through the entire exhibition: almost all of the exhibits and their mechanisms can be touched and experienced in a playful way.

Some of the installations shown in the exhibition also use motifs from Grimm's fairy tales. Jan Sauerwald: *"Here the fine parallels and cultural similarities with our neighbouring country are made obvious. The fairy tale collections by the writer Božena Němcová can be compared in their significance for storytelling culture in the Czech Republic with the Grimms' 'Children's and Household Tales' in Germany."* This cultural practice thus forms an outstanding example of the unifying element of culture.

IMAGINARIUM with its installations fills a whole exhibition hall and has already inspired large numbers of visitors in the Czech Republic and other European countries. Recently the project was shown in Germany in 2022/23 for the Czech Season in Dresden. Now the IMAGINARIUM of the Forman Brothers' Theatre can be seen for the first time in Kassel, with a walk-in theatre set specially designed for the GRIMMWELT.

The roots of the Forman Theatre go back to the 1980s, the period of "real existing socialism" in what was then Czechoslovakia. *"Lack of freedom and sometimes political oppression were no reason for us to resign, but rather for many people a summons to use their creative powers and artistic talents in defence of truth, freedom and true beauty,"* says Matěj Forman. Over the years, numerous performances took place, whether on a theatre ship, in mobile tents, or else in large theatres, in particular the Prague National Theatre and the Prague State Opera.

At the same time, Matěj Forman has been working with visual and theatre artists since 2010 to develop the exhibitions entitled IMAGINARIUM, in which theatre props, puppets and photographic impressions from earlier theatre projects are combined with other works over and over again to create new contexts and make them directly accessible and tangible in a unique way.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication edited by GRIMMWELT Kassel together with the well-known Czech journalist and author Jan Šícha and the author and geographer Dr. Veronika Hofinger.

The exhibition is generously sponsored by the city and district of Kassel, the Hessian Cultural Foundation and the German-Czech Future Fund.

**Participating artists:**

Josef Sodomka, Andrea Sodomková, Tereza Komárková, Renata Lhotáková, Martin Lhoták, Pavel Macek, Bärbel Haage, Veronika Podzimková, Barka Zichová, Kristýna Adámek Mlynaříková, Irena Vodáková, Lucie Valáška Bartoňová, Lenka Hájek Kristiánová, Bára Hubená, Miroslav Janek, Zdeněk Hlaváček, Tonička Janková

**Curator:**

Matej Forman

**Exhibition duration:**

09 | 05 | 2024 – 13 | 10 | 2024

**Opening hours of the GRIMMWELT:**

Tue to Sun 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. | Fri 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. | Mon closed

**Address:**

GRIMMWELT Kassel gGmbH  
Weinbergstraße 21  
34117 Kassel  
[www.grimmwelt.de](http://www.grimmwelt.de)

**Admission prices:**

Adults: €10, reduced: €7 | Families: €25

Group of 8 persons or more: €7

Children < 6 years: free admission

**Admission prices for temporary exhibition alone:**

Adults: €5, reduced: €3 | Families: €12

Groups of 8 or more: €3

**Press material:**

<https://www.grimmwelt.de/site/presse/>

**GRIMMWELT**

In GRIMMWELT Kassel, the Brothers Grimm are brought to life in the here and now: through art, media and interaction, this newly created world of adventure conveys the Brothers' fascinating life and work. Valuable originals, artistic installations along with interactive and multimedia features all draw visitors in to explore the permanent exhibition. With an international outlook, the venue presents the globally unifying cultural assets of 'fairy tales' and 'language' with great appeal, addressing children and adults, art lovers and fairy tale aficionados alike.