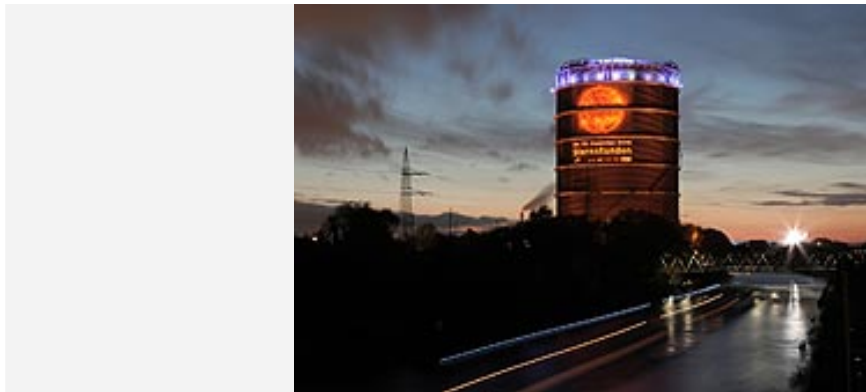


Press releases 2009

The exhibition 'Out of this World - Wonders of the Solar System' opens in the Oberhausen Gasometer

1 April 2009

The exhibition has meanwhile been extended until 30 December 2010.



The Oberhausen Gasometer

Fascinating pictures of alien worlds and 'the largest moon on Earth'

From Thursday, 2 April 2009 the new exhibition 'Out of this World - Wonders of the Solar System' will be open to visitors at the Oberhausen Gasometer. It shows our Solar System as a huge process of growth and decay and takes visitors on a journey into the cosmos. Spectacular reproductions of our planetary system, fascinating images of alien worlds, precious historical instruments and modern space research technology all form part of this multifaceted exhibition. The 'largest moon on Earth' can be seen under the Gasometer's 100-metre high roof.

Gasometer Oberhausen GmbH and the German Aerospace Center (Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt; DLR) are the presenters of 'Out of this World'. The exhibition is being held as part of the Year of Astronomy 2009, under the patronage of the Federal Chancellor, Dr Angela Merkel. Professor Johann-Dietrich Wörner, Chairman of the Executive Board of the DLR, said, "We are looking in wonderment at an exhibition that combines scientific and artistic points of view. It merges pictures and objects from research and artistically-positioned heavenly bodies into one unit, and leads visitors to within reach of the surfaces of far-off stars. In addition, the exhibition shows breathtaking pictures based on data that space probes have transmitted to Earth from the depths of outer space. The cosmic dimensions of the subjects can be experienced spatially. Human thought and sensation are equally inspired."



Pillars of creation

Jeanette Schmitz, Director of the Oberhausen Gasometer, said at the opening of the exhibition, "In previous exhibitions, more than three million people have already been deeply moved by the unique spatial experience provided by the Oberhausen Gasometer. With the new exhibition, we are symbolically opening the roof of the Gasometer for a fascinating glimpse into our Solar System. 'Out of this World - Wonders of the Solar System' reverses the viewpoint of the previous exhibition, 'The Eye in the Sky': Instead of looking at the Earth from outer space, we are looking into outer space from the Earth. We are thus continuing our successful cooperation with the German Aerospace Center, which actually made the previous exhibition possible for us. The exhibition runs until 10 January 2010. The curators are Professor Peter Pachnicke and Wolfgang Volz.

Pictures from current space missions

The cosmic dimensions are reflected in the unique size of the Gasometer. The exhibition starts underneath the former gas-pressure disc with a space-filling scene: The Sun and its planets hover there in a 68-metre wide room. Large format images show our Solar System, its development and its wonderful diversity.



The largest moon on Earth

Experience one month in 15 minutes

The Gasometer's 'main ring' provides a unique spatial experience over which the roof extends at a height of 100 metres. It is here that the 'largest moon on Earth', with a diameter of 25 metres, can be seen in the form of a gigantic sculpture - an idea from Wolfgang Volz. The installation shows all of the phases of the Moon from new moon to full moon and is accompanied by background music. One cycle of the phases of the Moon takes 15 minutes - during this time visitors can, for example, experience a Moon-month lying down on the floor of the main ring. A trip in the glass elevator reveals the Moon from above.

The enormous Moon balloon shows a quasi-realistic reproduction of the Earth's satellite. The image data used for the printing of the Moon's surface were prepared by scientists from the DLR's Institute of Planetary Research (Institut für Planetenforschung). Head of the Institute, Professor Tilman Spohn, says about the current state of research: "On the one hand, we know an astonishing amount: the planets have changed from small discs of light or dots in the night sky into their own worlds that we are now investigating using probes and, on their surfaces, automatic vehicles and landers. For example, today we have an idea of how craters and canyons look on Mars, how large the volcanoes are on Venus and so forth. But on the other hand, we still know very little. For example, we do not know whether simple forms of life existed or exist on Mars. Nor has it yet been established whether, for example, the Moon does actually have an iron core at its centre, or exactly how the Moon was formed. These are the exciting and mysterious questions being addressed in our current research."



A few grams of real moon dust

Exhibits

On the gas-pressure disc of the Gasometer there are cultural relicts, historical telescopes, measuring instruments, astronomical charts and old globes – and beside them the modern instruments of space research. Here it becomes clear how findings concerning cosmic happenings always made progress when new observation technologies revolutionised our gaze into the depths of the cosmos. Among other things, the exhibits include a few grams of real moon dust. The Soviet probe Luna 24 brought it back to Earth in 1976. There is also a Hasselblad camera with Zeiss lenses, as used by the Apollo astronauts on their trips to the Moon. The model shown was itself never on the Moon but is, however, an original backup camera.

In addition, visitors can see models of the comet landing vehicle Philae from the Rosetta mission, the High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC) from the Mars Express mission and the rover from the ExoMars mission. Also on display is a replica of the Voyager disc that was launched into space in 1977 as a cosmic 'message in a bottle'. An additional exhibit is a model of the GDR-made multi-spectral camera MKF6 like the one that accompanied Sigmund Jähn in 1978 on the first flight into space by a German. The exhibits are used to explain how the ideas about the origins and the development of the Solar System have changed from the myths of primitive peoples up to our scientific age.

The tallest exhibition hall in Europe

'Out of this World' can be seen in Europe's tallest exhibition hall. The Gasometer is the principal landmark of the city of Oberhausen, an impressive record of the history of building and technology and a spectacular venue. Large exhibitions in the Gasometer have been a successful part of the cultural landscape in North Rhine-Westphalia since 1994. The spatial experience in the interior of this 'industrial cathedral' is unique. The sevenfold or eightfold echo amazes visitors. From the roof of the Gasometer, accessed via the fully-glassed elevator in the interior, a magnificent panorama of the western Ruhr can be seen.

Visitor information

Opening times: Tuesday to Sunday and on holidays: 10:00 – 18:00,
closed on Monday, except on holidays in North Rhine-Westphalia

Admission:
Adults: Euro 7
Concession: Euro 5
Groups of 15 persons or more: Euro 5 per person
Family ticket: Euro 15
Season ticket: Euro 15
Students on class excursions: Euro 3.50 per person

Combination tickets:
With the Rheinisches Industriemuseum: Euro 8
With the Ludwig Galerie Schloss Oberhausen: Euro 8.50

Guided group tours: Advance reservation by telephone required, max. 30 persons: Euro 50
Foreign language guide: Euro 60
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