

“Caricatura – The Frankfurt Museum of Satire” moves to a new location



© Caricatura - Museum of Satire

November, Frankfurt am Main (tcf). Frankfurt’s renowned museum embankment welcomes a further addition to its already impressive array of cultural establishments. The “Caricatura” moved into its new abode at the Leinwandhaus on 01st October 2008. Aside from featuring various examples of satirical and comical art, the museum also has on display a permanent exhibition focusing on the artists of the so-called “New Frankfurt School”, featuring works by Chlowig Poth, Robert Gernhardt, F.K. Waechter, F.W. Bernstein and Hans Traxler, amongst others.

Mr. Achim Frenz, director of the Caricatura and co-publisher of the popular satirical magazine “Titanic”, was the driving force behind the idea of a museum of satire in Frankfurt, which is commonly accepted as “the city with the highest density of satirists



in Germany". This new forum for contemporary satire opened its doors to the public on 01st October, expanding Frankfurt's museum embankment by yet another unique exhibition venue. Visitors to the gothic-styled Leinwandhaus are greeted by a massive bronze sculpture of an elk, which was created by Hans Traxler.

The *New Frankfurt School* (NFS) is a name synonymous with Germany's leading satirists. The term is loosely based on the more famous "*Frankfurt School*" of the 1930s, an informal group of philosophers (Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno a.o.) who derived the so-called "Critical Theory of Society". One of the reasons behind the name is the fact that Frankfurt has over the years been home to an unusually large number of satirists, while also serving as the seat of Germany's most popular satirical magazine, "Titanic". The reference to the original Frankfurt School is meant satirically, with many works of the NFS alluding to the contrasts and similarities in thought and theory, such as the regular Titanic column entitled "Critique of Humour", which appears beneath a slightly altered image of Theodor Adorno.

The fact that a museum of satire is quite comfortably at home in Frankfurt is easy to understand when looking back at the history of the Main metropolis. Political satire has played a major role in Frankfurt ever since the social revolution of 1848. Frankfurt, a well-known media and publishing centre and home of St. Paul's Church – the symbol of the revolution per se – assumed the leading role in all matters of social and political examination very early on. It continued to be a centre of critical commentary and political satire after 1945, with the federal government and its representatives soon feeling the sting of Frankfurt's scrutiny and criticism. A firm stand was taken in newspapers and scientific symposia and the metropolis upon the Main, the home of Adorno's critical spirit and the Frankfurt School, soon regained its position as the heart and soul of German social and political satire.

