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STIFTUNG  
STADTKULTUR

## Restart of the Historical Cultural Location: Theater Karlshorst Becomes “KAHO. Space for Culture.”

**Berlin, 18 May 2021.** Berlin has gained an exceptional cultural location: the Stiftung Stadtkultur today announced the future usage concept and the new name of the former Theater Karlshorst in the south of Lichtenberg: **KAHO. Space for Culture.** The building was in a slumber for more than a decade.

With its renaming, a reactivation process is accelerating that began in 2018 with the foundation of the Stiftung Stadtkultur and the transfer of the listed building from the HOWOGE Wohnungsbaugesellschaft mbH to the Stiftung Stadtkultur. From 2022, the KAHO will be restored, refurbished and converted, and can presumably be used from 2025 as a multifunctional event venue for a range of art disciplines including theatre, cinema, concerts, readings and exhibitions.

### Visionary Restart

For the conversion to be experienced, the KAHO will already be open during the rebuilding phase. From the late summer of 2021, a varied **Interim Programme** is set to take place dealing with the building's past from various perspectives and creating a vision for its future. The patron **Klaus Lederer**, Mayor and Senator for Culture and Europe, views the programme as an encouragement for Berlin's cultural scene and creative industry in times of the pandemic: “**KAHO Interim 2021**” sets an example – the spirit of Berlin as a cultural capital cannot be broken.

The new **spatial and usage concept** for the KAHO was developed in 2018/19 in a series of workshop discussions with experts from architecture, culture and politics: the aim is to establish a multifunctional contemporary cultural location that offers new free spaces for multi-discipline art and urban culture – very much in the spirit of the “Berlin mixture”.

As to the programmatic **profile**, Pirkko Husemann, Chairwoman of the Stiftung Stadtkultur, states: “The identity of the KAHO is shaped by its special history as a former Soviet House of Officers and a locally rooted private theatre. We want to account for this past, while at the same time bringing the cultural location in the south of Lichtenberg, in the heart of Karlshorst and in the east of Berlin on track for the future. The KAHO is to become as location to which Berliners of all generations and with different social and cultural backgrounds can relate and where they can take part.”

So that the KAHO can become economically largely self-supporting, a **mixed use** by different actors is planned: by the foundation itself, in cooperation projects between the foundation and other partners and by external users. With this in mind, the Interim Programme will also serve as a gauge to find out for what the spaces of the KAHO are particularly suited and which offers at this location are in demand among Berliners.

# 01 KAHO PRESS RELEASE

In his words of welcome, the patron **Klaus Lederer** describes the significance of this transformation process: “Many years had to pass for the lights to go on again in the first theatre that was newly built in Germany after 1945. (...) The foundation of the Stiftung Stadtkultur was a strategic decision in favour of the HOWOGE’s social and cultural responsibility and a crucial boost to revive the location. It is now being restored, refurbished and converted, so that in 2025 it can shine in new splendour in the heart of Berlin-Karlshorst.”

## **Conversion and History**

After the conversion, the former large stage will become a contemporary event venue for up to 600 people. In early 2021, the building application was authorised. Plans are currently being made in the areas of monument preservation, architecture, statics, building services and event technology. The conversion is set to begin in 2022 and is to be completed in 2025. The auditorium, stage and foyers – which can be separately used – will be functionally converted to a state-of-the-art event venue according to the guidelines for historical monuments. The task of the architects is to partially return the monument to its original state, while also newly designing the building ensemble. The **Berlin-based architect’s office dhl-architekten**, distinguished by many years of experience with buildings dedicated to art and culture as well as by great expertise in the innovative treatment of heritage-protected structures, has been commissioned with the implementation.

Built in 1948/1949 as “Dramatisches Theater Karlshorst”, it was initially used until 1963 as House of Officers accessible only for Soviet members of the military and civilian employees, since it was located in the Soviet restricted zone that the Berliners termed the “forbidden city”. The restricted zone was abolished in 1963, so that the theatre was also open for the general population and used for youth ceremonies, concerts, theatre performances and film screenings.

In 1994 the theatre complex passed into the possession of the Wohnungsbaugesellschaft Lichtenberg mbH, which is today part of the HOWOGE. The building was subsequently used for culture until theatre operations ended in 2007. In 2018 the HOWOGE transferred the building complex to the Stiftung Stadtkultur which it founded and tasked by statute with refurbishing the building and once again making it accessible to the public as a cultural location.

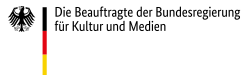
Images and further information about the KAHO can be found [here](#).

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## We cordially thank our benefactor and partners

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- spring brand ideas
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## About the Stiftung Stadtkultur

The non-profit Stiftung Stadtkultur was founded in April 2018 by the state-owned Berlin housing company HOWOGE. It carries out projects in the areas of culture, education and social affairs with a main emphasis on the Berlin district of Lichtenberg. With its projects for people of all generations and with different backgrounds, the foundation seeks to facilitate the formation of temporary communities, changes in perspective and active participation, thus contributing to strengthening the polity in Berlin.

## Press contact:

Markengold PR GmbH, Eva Zahl  
for the Stiftung Stadtkultur  
kaho@stiftung-stadtkultur.de | Telephone: 030 219 159 60