

Press release

Berlin, 30 September 2019

Festival of Lights: Three large-scale projections onto two of the Humboldt Forum's facades

On the occasion of this year's *Festival of Lights*, the Humboldt Forum presents two large-scale projections from 11 to 20 October, starting at 7 pm every evening and ending at midnight. On the eastern facade, visitors can marvel at the artistic video projections *O Ciclo Anual no Rio Tiquié / The Annual Cycle on the River Tiquié* and *250 Jahre jung! Alles ist Wechselwirkung / 250 Years Young! Everything is Interconnected*. The two projections, with their astronomical drawings of the night skies over the Amazon region and pictures and quotes from Alexander von Humboldt's life, have already been briefly premiered during the celebrations of Humboldt's 250th birthday where they met with an enthusiastic audience response. On the western facade, a static picture – projected onto the Humboldt Forum for the first time – will provide a lively illustration of the interconnective element in the work of the two brothers Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt.

O Ciclo Anual no Rio Tiquié / The Annual Cycle on the River Tiquié

The video projection provides Berlin audiences with a new opportunity to watch indigenous illustrators from the upper reaches of Brazil's Rio Negro at work. The constellations drawn for the projection by the illustrators – Tuyuka, Tukano, Desana and Yebamasa – are the ones used by their elders in their observations of the annual cycle. This fascinating insight into the complexity of indigenous knowledge is told through drawing and enactment by the indigenous people themselves, and represents a very special form of artistic collaboration. It provides space for the visual meeting of two worlds that have shared a common heritage since Humboldt's day.

The projections were realized by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss in close cooperation with the Ethnologisches Museum der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin and the Brazilian NGO Instituto Socioambiental (ISA), which has been conducting projects on indigenous education and intercultural research on the upper Rio Negro since 2003. *O Ciclo Anual no Rio Tiquié / The Annual Cycle on the River Tiquié* reminds us of the fragility of the indigenous way of life, with all its consequences. The work of NGOs such as ISA is currently being made increasingly difficult in Brazil – the threat to the living environment of the Amazon is greater than at any time in its history.

250 Years Young! Everything is Interaction

The projection *250 Years Young! Everything is Interaction* was produced by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss as part of the Humboldt Year celebrations and will turn the eastern facade of the Humboldt Forum into a showcase for the life and thought of Alexander von Humboldt. Everything is interaction – his central observation regarding nature and the world – is investigated using an interplay between light, pictures and architecture.

The projection is a journey into the multi-layered and multifaceted mind of this outstanding scientist, researcher and philosopher, who is distinguished by his understanding of science as a means of simultaneously seeing from different perspectives, formulating ideas in different languages, and conceiving of nature and culture in unison. The projection shows Humboldt not as a hero, but as a scientist and human being.

“Thus every language embodies its own view of the world.”

The Humboldt Forum is named for both Alexander von Humboldt and his brother Wilhelm. The work of the two brothers, their spirit of discovery and their research methods are an inspiration to the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work of this future cultural centre in the heart of Berlin. What tangible connections exist between the activities of the two brothers? What questions did they examine, what ideas and methods did the two embrace and what is the significance of their *oeuvre* for the work of the Humboldt Forum?

This is the broad research field, exemplified by the Humboldt brothers' investigations into language and linguistic systems, that forms the subject matter for the static image projected onto the western facade of the Humboldt Forum during the *Festival of Lights*. The projection shows a facsimile of a document – brought back by Alexander von Humboldt from his celebrated journey to the Americas – that describes the political history of the Central American kingdom of Tlapa Tlachinollan (1300 to 1564), in particular the payment of tributes made to the Aztecs in the years 1486/1487 and 1521/1522. These hieroglyphs reveal a quite unique imagination – in its most fundamental meaning as a world of images – and illustrate the parallel projection of Wilhelm von Humboldt's statement: “Thus every language embodies its own view of the world”.

Festival of Lights: Three large-scale projections onto two of the Humboldt Forum's facades

Date: Friday, 11.10. to Sunday, 20.10.2019

Time: every day from 7pm to midnight

Location: the eastern facade of the Humboldt Forum, best viewed from Marx-Engels-Forum; the western facade of the Humboldt Forum, best viewed from Schinkelplatz

Entry: free of charge

O Ciclo Anual no Rio Tiquié / The Annual Cycle on the River Tiquié

Cesar Meira Barbosa, Damião Amaral Barbosa, Felix Rezende Barbosa, Tarcísio Borges Barreto, Lucas Alves Bastos, Aloisio Cabalzar, Thiago da Costa Oliveira, Mikko Gaestel, Amarildo da Silva Lima, Cipriano Marques Lima, Salvador Marques Lima, Raiz Campos Lucena, Edilson Villegas Ramos, Lenilza Marques Ramos, Josival Azevedo Rezende, Ismael Pimentel dos Santos, Andrea Scholz, Antonio Marques Tenorio, Pieter Van der Veld.

A production of the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss (SHF) in cooperation with the Ethnologisches Museum der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (SMB) and the Instituto Socioambiental (ISA). The idea for the facade projection was conceived in the context of the "Geteiltes Wissen" long term cooperation project, which originated in the Humboldt Lab Dahlem (2012–2015) and which is currently being continued in the Ethnologisches Museum thanks to funding by the Volkswagen Foundation and the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

Project management: Andrea Scholz (SMB), Andrea Rostásy, Lavinia Frey (SHF);

Production management: Philipp Hochleichter (SHF).

250 Years Young! Everything is Interaction

A video production by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss (SHF).
Project management: Lavinia Frey (SHF), Andrea Rostásy; Production: Luxoom Medienprojekte; Production management: Philipp Hochleichter (SHF)

"Thus every language embodies its own view of the world."

Still image production by the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss (SHF).

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