MEDIA RELEASE

Einstein Museum

Albert Einstein: walking in the footsteps of a genius

Albert Einstein (1879–1955) was living in Berne in 1905, when his theory of relativity turned our perceptions of space and time upside down. The Einstein Museum at the Bernisches Historisches Museum celebrates this memorable event. Elaborately staged original objects as well as written and film documents outline the biography of the genius while at the same time illustrating the major topics of his time.

The temporary exhibition about the life and work of the famous physicist Albert Einstein shown in the Bernisches Historisches Museum in 2005/6 was a resounding success. So much so that it was decided to incorporate a condensed version into the permanent exhibition. The newly named “Einstein Museum” takes up approximately 1000 m² and uses some 550 original objects and replicas as well as 70 films and numerous animations to provide an insight into Albert Einstein’s biography. His groundbreaking discoveries also illustrate the history of his time and shed light on important events that occurred in the 20th century. One of the highlights of the exhibition is Albert Einstein’s Swiss passport from the collection of the Bernisches Historisches Museum.

Scientist, private person and contemporary witness

Aspects from Albert Einstein’s private and working life are dealt with and bring out the person behind the genius. The discoveries the scientist made in physics are explained by means of easy-to-understand animations. His love affairs, his commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament in his later years and other personal insights paint a comprehensive picture of Albert Einstein as a person.

Visitors to the exhibition walk in the footsteps of the physicist through the various stages of his life. Having spent his childhood in Ulm and Munich, he studied in Switzerland. In 1902, Albert Einstein’s first permanent employment at the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property brought him to Berne, where three years later he went on to revolutionise physics with his ground-breaking theories. The scientist continued his research in Berlin where he worked on the general theory of relativity in the middle of the First World War. When practical proof of some of the theory was found in 1919, he gained lasting fame, which was yet further enhanced by his public support for European peace just before the outbreak of the Second World War. The exhibition comes to its conclusion in Princeton where the genius spent the final years of his life.
Modern staging: immersing oneself in Albert Einstein’s life and world
Climbing the mirrored stairway will make visitors forget reality and will immediately transport them into the world of Albert Einstein. Original photographs, documents and everyday items give an impression of his life and his surroundings. The pioneering discoveries of the physicist are juxtaposed with the technical inventions of his time. The electric motor symbolises the beginning of electrification in different areas of life, while a type writer and a manual vacuum cleaner represent appliances that drastically changed people’s everyday lives at the time. The modern staging brings the period around 1900 back to life with a corner shop and revives the atmosphere of the 1920s with a cinema. Virtual animations illustrate Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity in an easy-to-understand manner, while film footage from the time brings the past back to life.

Technical aids: a museum for everyone
An audio guide in nine languages, inductive headphones as well as a video guide for hearing-impaired and deaf visitors (in Swiss German) make the museum accessible to a wide audience from all parts of the world.

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Pictures
are available for download in the ‘media’ section of our website www.bhm.ch.