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Press release

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Review

22nd Erlangen International Comic Salon – 4 to 7 June 2026

New audiences reached

Over 35,000 visitors attended the largest festival for graphic literature and comic art in the German-speaking world

On Sunday evening, 7 June, the 22nd Erlangen International Comic Salon closed its doors. Exhibitors and the event's organiser, the City of Erlangen's Cultural Office, are very pleased with the response. Over 35,000 visitors came to the exhibition tents and the more than 20 venues throughout Erlangen city centre in ideal weather conditions – more than ever before.

For four days, everything in Erlangen revolved around comic art. Around 300 exhibitors and 600 artists presented their work to readers in the exhibition tent halls, 19 exhibitions could be explored in Erlangen city centre, and well over 300 events – often on challenging cultural, political, artistic and social themes – were remarkably well received. With the Erlangen Culture and Education Campus (kubic), which opened just a few weeks ago, an additional festival centre has been created. Among other things, it hosted the extensive children's and family programme "Kinder lieben Comics", featuring workshops, open studios, readings, live drawing sessions and a treasure hunt, which alone attracted around 5,000 visitors. Alongside the exhibition highlights "Christoph Niemann. To the Point" at the Erlangen Kunstpalaais, "What's So Funny? The Comic Art of Walter Moers" at the City Museum, "Silent Comics. How to say a lot without words" and "Isabel Kreitz – The pen is my sixth finger" at the Kunstmuseum Erlangen, as well as the major Simpsons exhibition "The Simpsons – It doesn't get any yellower than this!!", smaller exhibitions on political themes such as "#iceoutcomics – Taking up the pen against Trump and U.S. deportation policy", "Roya Soraya – Wind in my headscarf", or "Shadow Lives – Stories from Undocumented People" also attracted great interest.

Exhibitors at the fair also spoke very positively about the 22nd edition of the International Comic Salon: "For us, the International Comic Salon is always the perfect place to celebrate premieres and new releases with fans and our artists," said the Egmont Ehapa publishing house, which celebrated the launch of "75 Years of Micky Maus Magazine" in Erlangen. Dirk Rehm, head of the Reprodukt publishing house, had invited 25 international artists, including French superstar Lewis Trondheim – "an investment that paid off", he confirmed. The Berlin-based avant-verlag had brought José Muñoz and Dominique Bertail, among others, to Erlangen. Johann Ulrich described it as the "best Salon" he had ever attended. Claudia

Jerusalem from Carlsen Verlag also expressed great satisfaction, highlighting that she had observed the ever-growing public interest not only at the stand but also at the numerous events in which her publishing house was involved. Dirk Schulz from Splitter-Verlag noted more foreign licensors among the Salon's guests, and for Steffen Volkmer of Panini Comics, the Erlangen Comic Salon is "an indispensable part of the German and international comic scene"; he thus highlighted the thematic and aesthetic diversity of the many events and exhibitions, as well as the festival's visibility within the city.

In the concluding round-up on late Sunday afternoon with publishing representatives, moderated by Alex Jakubowski, the discussion not only looked back on the Salon but also examined the state of the industry as a whole. It became clear that the mood is characterised by a sense of subdued optimism. Rising production costs coupled with readers' dwindling purchasing power are presenting publishers with increasing challenges, particularly when it comes to high-quality books. After all, the comic market is still growing, in contrast to the book market as a whole.

However, Steffen Volkmer of Panini Comics believes that the potential of graphic literature is far from exhausted: "The market is still not fully tapped". "We need to publish even more comics by German-speaking artists that tackle issues relevant to us in the German-speaking world," added Dirk Rehm from Reprodukt. The International Comics Salon plays an important role in this regard, as it attracts new audiences to graphic literature like hardly any other event. The problem, however, according to the unanimous opinion on the panel, is that far too few artists in Germany can still make a living from comics. Most earn their living from illustration commissions, which are under threat from artificial intelligence. Indeed, AI was a central theme, including during the closing panel: in the print sector, publishers do not expect AI-generated comics to take over the market. Marie-France Lombardo from the Swiss publisher Edition Moderne emphasised on the panel that readers are also interested in the people behind the books. Nevertheless, artists from the audience called for a clear stance from influential comic publishers and a ban on AI-generated comics.

As part of the Erlangen International Comic Salon, the Max und Moritz Award, the most prestigious distinction for graphic literature in the German-speaking world, was presented in eight categories on the evening of 5 June: The award for Best Non-Fiction Comic went to "Die Frau als Mensch" by Ulli Lust; "Der verkehrte Himmel" by Mikael Ross was named Best German-Language Comic; the Best International Comic is "In den trüben Gewässern Istanbul" by Özge Samancı; and Franz Suess was named Best German-Language Comic Artist. The Max und Moritz Award for Best Children's Comic went to "Der Zahn" by Ayşe Klinge, whilst the award for Best German-Language Comic Debut went to "Fleischeslust" by Martin Oesch. The Paul Derouet Award, presented for the first time, was awarded to "Abgang" by Lina Brazerol, honouring an outstanding academic publication with an invitation to the renowned International Comic Seminar in Erlangen. The jury's special award went to the journalist Andreas C. Knigge for his outstanding contributions to the art of comics in Germany. As announced in the run-up to the awards ceremony, British artist Posy Simmonds was honoured with the Special Life Achievement Award.

The exhibition "What's So Funny? The Comic Art of Walter Moers" can be seen at the City Museum until 13 September. The two exhibitions at the Kunstmuseum, "Isabel Kreitz – The Pen is My Sixth Finger" and "Silent Comics. How to Say a Lot Without Words", run until 5 July. "Erlangen Noir – Michael Jordan, TONTO & Friends" is on display at the Kreativlabor until 28 June, "Lisa Neun – The Dream is Over, Charly P." runs at the EL ARTElier until 17 July, and the Comicmuseum Erlangen e. V. is presenting "Ducks Saving Themselves in Rockets – A Brief Anatomy of the Drawings and Stories by Florian Satzinger" in its event and exhibition space until 26 July.

The 23rd International Comic Salon Erlangen will take place from 15 to 18 June 2028.

DATEV eG is the title sponsor of the International Comic Salon Erlangen for the sixth time in 2026. As an IT service provider for tax consultants, auditors and lawyers as well as their clients, such as small and medium-sized enterprises, and local authorities, the cooperative is one of the largest employers in the Nuremberg metropolitan region and, at the same time, one of Europe's leading software houses.

Latest images can be found on our website at www.comic-salon.de/de/pressebilder. If you have any questions, you can still contact the press office of the International Comic Salon on tel. 0049 (0)9131 86-1031.

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