

PRESS INFORMATION

Friedrichstadt-Palast surpasses its €20 million sales mark for the first time

New record year: €21.2 million in sales (9 percent increase) /// Attendance rose 7 percentage points to 82 percent /// 449,539 paying visitors (not counting guest performances)

Berlin, January 4, 2011

Friedrichstadt-Palast continues on its successful course: In the 2010 business year that just ended, the show palace increased its sales by €1.6 million to €21.2 million, setting a new sales record in the theater's history. In 2009, self-generated revenues (the amount from tickets sales, the theater's restaurant, guest performances and events, not including subsidies from the state of Berlin) were still at €19.5 million.

The 9 percent sales increase is due to very successful ticket sales, which could be boosted to €19.1 million in 2010 and comprise 90 percent of the above-mentioned revenue. Ticket sales for the previous year totaled €17.5 million. In 2007, ticket sales were still at €12.3 million, which means that there was an increase of more than 55 percent in three years.

With the revenue increase, visitor numbers and attendance also rose. A total of 449,539 paying guests attended shows at Friedrichstadt-Palast in 2010. In 2009, there were 432,128 guests. This means there was a 4 percent increase in 2010 despite the fact that set work for the new show 'Yma' (which premiered on September 2, 2010) meant that 14 shows fewer were offered than in 2009. In 2008, the theater only had 360,701 guests. In 2001, the visitor record year to date, the theater had 514,578 paying visitors – but at the time with over €3 million less in ticket sales.

Dr. Berndt Schmidt, who has been the theater's managing director since 2007, comments: "In two years, we gained 90,000 guests. The average age continues to decrease but not because older guests are staying away, but because an increasing number of younger guests are discovering us." This is how he explains the impressive increase in visitors that took place at the end of the year: "The enormous surge comes from our successful show, 'Yma,' which has sent box office sales skyrocketing. From the standpoint of monthly viewer numbers, it might be the most successful national stage premiere of 2010." In 'Yma's' first four months, more than 200,000 guests saw the show, and another 100,000 tickets were sold for performances for the first half of 2011.

Attendance increased by 7 percentage points from 75 percent to almost 82 percent in 2010. In 2008, attendance for the year was at 64 percent, which means that attendance increased by almost one-third in two years. So, in 2010, an average of 1,550 paying guests attended each show. The large auditorium has a seating capacity of 1,895. In addition, there are many guest performances throughout the year (concerts, ballet evenings), major events such as the Berlinale and the visitors who come to see Thomas Hermanns' 'Quatsch Comedy Club,' which means that 107 Friedrichstrasse has almost 700,000 guests annually. Based on attendance rates, Friedrichstadt-Palast is the top German stage.

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Almost a quarter million of the guests were tourists who stayed overnight in Berlin. According to Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, each overnight guest spends an average of €196.70 per day when visiting Berlin, and according to a study conducted by Berlin's Cultural Affairs Department in conjunction with the tourism portal 'visitBerlin,' cultural tourists who visit one of the city's theaters during their stay, spend an average of 3.67 days in Berlin, which is clearly longer than the average visitor. These calculations also showed that guests of Friedrichstadt-Palast spent about €180 million in the German capital.

This positive impact on the Berlin tourism market was subsidized by the Berlin Senate which contributed €6.46 million. In other words, each ticket (for shows for children and adults) received a relatively moderate €14 subsidy. The largest theater stage in the world requires productions which correspond to its size but which cannot be completely financed through market prices. With these modern revue shows, the city-state of Berlin has another unique selling point within Europe and within its broad cultural portfolio.

The average ticket price for adult shows rose from €38.12 in 2008 to €48.35 in 2010. This was an increase of more than a quarter in two years and was mainly due to two factors: not selling discounted tickets and a consistent pricing policy for the better and best seating categories. But the starting price for tickets (price category 5) remains unchanged at a reasonably priced €18.90 (including fees). With the Berlin Senate's 'BerlinPass,' socially disadvantaged persons can even see the shows for as little as €3 per ticket.

Despite these successes, Friedrichstadt-Palast is keeping both feet on the ground. Managing Director Berndt Schmidt comments: "A 55 percent sales increase in three years shows what the theater is capable of accomplishing when we delight our audience – and when good fortune smiles on us. Each premiere is ultimately a bit of a game of chance and cultural success can never be fully planned. So I'm all the more relieved that everything went as planned."

Note to media representatives: All figures mentioned refer to paying guests. Complimentary tickets were not included in the visitor and attendance numbers. If you refer to our press release dated January 7, 2010 for comparative purposes, you will see minor differences in the 2009 business figures listed there. In the final financial statement dated March 2010, there was a slight improvement in these figures.

The figures for 2010 are based on the preliminary annual financial statement for Friedrichstadt-Palast.