

## PRESS INFORMATION

# Festival of lights and hope: Friedrichstadt-Palast Berlin and Jewish Forum for Democracy and Against Anti-Semitism celebrate Hanukkah

Berlin, 14 December 2017



Jeremy Issacharoff, Israel's ambassador to Germany, at the Friedrichstadt-Palast. Photo: Jana Honczek

The Friedrichstadt-Palast Berlin celebrated the festival of lights together with the Jewish Forum for Democracy and Against Anti-Semitism. More than 300 invited guests including Israel's ambassador to Germany Jeremy Issacharoff were welcomed to the world's biggest theatre stage.

General Director Dr. Berndt Schmidt and Jeremy Issacharoff lit the first two Hanukkah candles. "The theatre and revue tradition at the Palast was established by two Jews, Max Reinhardt and Erik Charell. Coupled with the recent deplorable debates among members of the extreme right on Germany's atonement for its past, this was also why celebrating this Jewish festival of hope here at the Palast was a matter so close to my heart during these times of increased animosity towards Jews" This year, Hanukkah will be celebrated from 12 to 20 December and commemorate consecration of the second Jewish temple in Jerusalem in 165 BCE.

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Friedrichstadt-Palast Berlin

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General Director:  
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Chairman of the Supervisory Board:  
Dr. Klaus Lederer  
Senator for Culture and Europe



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After being greeted by Rabbi Boris Ronis, the Boris Rosenthal Trio delighted guests with lively rhythms on the guitar, clarinet, double bass. "Berlin is an open and tolerant place. Today more than ever before, we need civil courage to combat anti-Semitic crimes," reminded Lala Süsskind in her welcome address. Together with Levi Salomon, she established the Jewish Forum for Democracy and Against Anti-Semitism (JFDA) in 2008 with the support of Berlin's Jewish community.

The Vice President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany Mark Dainow also attended the event. Further guests included Dr. Manuela Schmidt (Vice President of the Berlin House of Representatives), Ulrike Trautwein (General Superintendent of the Evangelical Church in Berlin, Brandenburg and Silesian Upper Lusatia), Dr. Ralf Kleindiek (Permanent State Secretary at the Ministry of Family Affairs), Reinhard Naumann (District Mayor for Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf), members of the German Bundestag and Berlin House of Representatives, Holocaust survivor Margot Friedlander, publicists Lea Rosh and Nea Weissberg, and a delegation from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Given that it has survived two dictatorships over the course of its 98-year history, the Friedrichstadt-Palast today stands for freedom, diversity and tolerance. In November 2015, a memorial was unveiled on Friedrichstraße dedicated to its three founding fathers, Max Reinhardt, Hans Poelzig and Erik Charell, who helped to shape the theatre's style and all later suffered under the National Socialists.

More information:

[www.jfda.de](http://www.jfda.de) (Jewish Forum for Democracy and Against Anti-Semitism)

[www.palast.berlin/en/backstage/memorial](http://www.palast.berlin/en/backstage/memorial) (memorial outside the Palast)

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