

Press release

Bonn/Berlin, 25.09.2008

How will America vote?

Berlin's Amerika Haus opens its doors for a series of events on the US presidential elections

From 29th September to 24th November 2008 the Amerika Haus in Berlin will host „How will America vote? Insights and Perspectives“, a series of events on the forthcoming US presidential elections. The Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (bpb), the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) and the Amerika Haus Berlin Initiative are organizing seven events that will give the general public the chance to learn about the background to the elections whilst staying up to date with the latest developments throughout the campaign.

The series starts with a discussion on how Americans in Germany and Germans in the USA experience the elections. The invited speakers include Werner Peters, author of „Rätsel Amerika – Warum Amerikaner ganz anders sind“ and Scot W. Stevenson, nominated for the Grimme Online Award 2007 for his blog „USA Erklärt“ (the USA explained). The discussion will focus on issues such as how Americans see themselves, the characteristics and values that the candidates represent, and whether being able to identify with the candidates is important for voters. The exhibition „U.S.fAcets“ on the 1st floor of the Amerika Haus accompanies these events. German and American artists present impressions of America - poverty and commerce, protest and vision, hope and happiness.

The events will include a discussion of the voting system in the USA, an analysis of the election campaigns of the respective camps, and a critical look at the use of music and media by the candidates. October 13th 2008 will see the excitement in Washington reproduced in Berlin as representatives of the Democrats Abroad and Republicans Abroad take to the stage for a live debate.

The highlight of the series is „Election Night in Berlin“ on 4th November: A diverse program of live interviews, discussions, readings and music will entertain the public as the race reaches its climax. In the finale of the program „The world's superpower has voted – what does the rest of the world say?“ on November 24th, diplomats and journalists from Europe and the USA will give their reaction to the results.

The speakers at the events are experts and prominent figures from the areas of academia and politics, with campaigners from both sides also present. The discussions will be followed by live performances from American musicians.

Berlin's Amerika Haus (Hardenbergstrasse 22-24) will host all of the events. A symbol of the German-American history of the city, the building has unfortunately been closed since 2006. The location was reopened temporarily in spring 2008 for the bpb exhibition „68 – Brennpunkt Berlin“. The series „How will America vote“ will see the building open to the general public again for a number of weeks.

All events are open to the general public and are free to attend. The program and further information can be found under: www.initiative-amerika-haus-berlin.org.

Images of Amerika Haus Berlin are available through: pressestelle@bpb.de. To register please contact walth@culturaldiplomacy.org.

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An overview of the program:

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|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday, 29.09.08, 7.00 p.m.: | How Americans in Germany and Germans in the USA experience the election campaign |
| Monday, 06.10.2008, 7.00 p.m.: | Senators, Governors and Presidents: Who is elected and how does the election process in the U.S. work? |
| Monday, 13.10.2008, 7.00 p.m.: | A live debate between Democrats and Republicans |
| Wednesday, 22.10.2008, 7.00 p.m.: | Foreign policy under Obama or McCain |
| Monday, 27.10.2008, 7.00 p.m.: | Music and media in the US election campaign |
| Tuesday, 04.11.2008, 6.00 p.m.: | Election night in Berlin |
| Monday, 24.11.2008, 7.00 p.m.: | Reaction to the results with diplomats, politicians and journalists |

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