

Information on HÖRPOL



"Anyone listening to HÖRPOL will not be able to avoid talking to one another."

(Lala Süsskind, former president of the Jewish Community Berlin)

HÖRPOL – a unique audio guide

- ... in German and English
- ... also available for smart phones and tablets
- ... autonomous and without time pressure
- ... through Berlin or through the classroom
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HÖRPOL – a unique audio guide

After almost two years of research, trial phase and production, the German version of HÖRPOL started in June 2009. Since then, this unique audio guide provides young people, families and schools from Berlin and the rest of Germany with a tour through Jewish history, giving information on anti-Semitism, xenophobia and right-wing extremism.

In 26 different locations HÖRPOL tells stories about yesterday and tomorrow, gives away secrets, reveals madness and lies, hate, desperation and hope, tells of courage, respect and freedom. Contemporary witnesses talk about their lives. Rock bands and hip-hop groups from Berlin provide their music – in German, English and Hebrew. Actors, writers and presenters recite texts. And time and again one can listen to the voices of pupils and trainees from a total of eight different schools and training facilities, offering their commentary, encouraging responses, giving food for thought.

Meanwhile the young listeners are passing through a part of the city they generally enjoy spending time in anyway, in this phase of their life, no matter whether they are from Berlin or just visiting the city: along the river Spree, past lawns for sunbathing, music clubs and cafés.

HÖRPOL does not require much previous knowledge and is therefore suited as an introduction into the topic area for a broad target group. It combines history with current everyday experiences, provoking questions and leaving enough space for defining one's individual standpoint.

On average, the website registers more than 3000 visitors per month, encouraging users to copy and pass on the MP3 files and information once they have downloaded them.



The Undersecretary for Culture, Bernd Neumann, nominated HÖRPOL for the **BKM-Preis Kulturelle Bildung 2012**: this award annually acknowledges "outstanding, exemplary projects imparting arts and culture".

More><http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Pressemitteilungen/BPA/2012/06/2012-06-12-bkm-preis.html>



HÖRPOL was awarded the German educational media award „**digita 2010**“ The German version also includes accompanying teaching material which was developed in cooperation with LISUM (Landesinstitut für Schule und Medien Berlin-Brandenburg / Federal State Institute for Schools and Media Berlin-Brandenburg). Downloading this material is also free of charge.

More><http://www.digita.de/2010/schul3.htm>

... in German and English

After the Goethe-Institut introduced HÖRPOL via the internet in several languages all over the world, requests for an English version became more frequent. In internet forums the monolingualism of HÖRPOL was also deplored:

“Friday we went on an alternative city tour in the centre which was focusing on Jews, 2nd World War and life then. We heard many interesting stories from contemporary witnesses on an audio guide which you can download on: [hoerpol.de](http://www.hoerpol.de) Unfortunately, it's only in German.” Source: <http://www.chris-leaving-le.blogspot.de/2009/08/discover-germany-tour-berlin.html>

The translation and production took seven months – from June 18th, 2012, HÖRPOL will be available in two languages. With the English version, HÖRPOL will reach beyond the target group of German speaking users and their spheres of life and culture and now also invites international guests in Berlin to engage in conversations and discussions – on democracy, tolerance, religious freedom, a multicultural communal life.

... also available for smart phones and tablets



Funded by the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, HÖRPOL is now also directly available for smart phones and tablets*: as a free web app, accessible on hoerpol.de or [QR-Code](#).

Between the audio stations, GPS-supported orientation is available from an extra HÖRPOL-map.

... autonomous and without time pressure

HÖRPOL is generally free of charge and freely accessible. At hoerpol.de one can download the audio files at any time to an MP3 player or a mobile phone. City maps with the locations of the audio stations are available as PDF files.

The audio stations have titles such as GIFT, POWER, PARTY, STARS, PISSED ON, HUH??, SHARDS, NO!, COURAGE, KISS, etc.: there is no prescribed route, no beginning and no end. Rather, the subtle motto applies: “You decide on the way forward!”



It's also up to each individual, how many audio stations he/she wants to listen to. It takes about two hours to listen to ten audio stations, including taking a break to lie on the grass or to browse in a jeans shop – everyday life and history become connected, links become clear.

... through Berlin or through the classroom



Youths with bicycles on HÖRPOL-tour

Although HÖRPOL was originally designed as a „city walk“ through Berlin Mitte especially for young people, people's experiences assign other possible applications to HÖRPOL:

„...in that context a really great project in Berlin comes to mind: an acoustic associative guide to locations in Berlin that were touched by National Socialism. For our family this was an experience of a new and really moving dimension. (...) What is also great is that you don't have to follow a certain order on the map but can just go ahead. It is really a fantastic project, and what's amazing is that it is free of charge.“

Source:

<http://pfiffi-freundeskreis.bboard.de/board/ftopic-74582471nx3749-103027.html>

Lernen aus der Geschichte

lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de (online platform „Learning from History“) writes: “The audio guide is multilaterally applicable in educational work within schools and outside

of schools. In its conventional function as a neighbourhood tour guide it is attractive for Berlin visitors and Berlin schools alike. For non-locals the guide offers an exciting introduction to Berlin Mitte off the beaten track of ordinary city tours. For Berliners it provides the chance to deal with the history of National Socialism very specifically by example of one's own city.

But even when it is not possible to use the audio guide on-site, individual tracks can for instance be applied in the classroom. Especially the stories of contemporary witnesses, edited and presented in an unconventional way, are ideal for addressing topics such as the history of everyday life during National Socialism and questions concerning one's own positioning between collaboration, looking away and resistance. The local context is certainly a great gain, however, the files can also be applied universally outside of this context.”

Source: <http://lernen-aus-der-geschichte.de/Lernen-und-Lehren/content/9235>

... for a different type of teaching

Individual HÖRPOL stations have already been used as source material for developing scenes in the classroom or as a first step for school group projects dealing with “Anti-Semitism today”. HÖRPOL also served as the starting point for a creative, media-supported initiation of discussions on history in an international further education course for teachers at the Goethe-Institut in Berlin in June 2011. Antje Rüger and Julia Lee, seminar facilitators for the Goethe-Institut:



(from left): Rzepka Katharina – Portugal, Olena Torhachova – Ukraine, Mazen Uklah – Syria/Germany, Erdal Kacar – Turkey

“On one hand, the 17 teachers of German from 14 different countries broadened their didactic and methodical competencies in this seminar, on the other hand they explored Berlin in diverse ways:

The seminar participants formed small groups and during one day each of them explored one respective audio station. This gave them enough time to actually engage with their surroundings and to exchange with one another their impressions and observations. The participants were asked to pay special attention to contrasts, e.g. to traces of today and yesterday, certain shops and the sub culture, national and international aspects. Each group recorded their observations on site in a short video sequence with simple cameras. Some groups also interviewed pedestrians or other protagonists, or they staged a scene at a café. In the afternoon the videos were edited. Thus, the teachers can also take home a visual recording of their impressions and will be able to use this and the other HÖRPOL material to create their German lessons far away from Berlin very vividly.

All of the teachers were very impressed by HÖRPOL. Many want to try the audio walk with their students when they come to Berlin. The open design of the guided walk in combination with digital media time and again provides for new and unusual views and encounters with places and people in Berlin.”

... about yesterday and today

In 26 audio stations HÖRPOL confronts young users with diverse information on the topic areas “Jewish life in Berlin during National Socialism” and “Anti-Semitism and xenophobia today”:

The audio stations deal with assimilation, marginalisation and destruction of Jews in Berlin during the years from 1933 to 1945, but also with communal life, resistance and protest. The attitude of non-Jewish Germans during National Socialism is addressed, as well as the way the perpetrators were dealt with after 1945, and this is related to current anti-Semitism and xenophobia right up to projects and ideas for a future multicultural and multi-religious communal life.

Small incidents are related, dramatic but also everyday events, complete biographies and individual cases, examples from everyday life during National Socialism but also examples for the activities and strategies of “modern Nazis” today.

Some of the audio stations are subtle and humorous like the one performed by Axel Prahl and the German-Turkish cabaret artist Murat Topal, a radio show on the Jewish manufacturer of condoms, Julius Fromm, whose “Jewish invention” – the seamless condom – vividly enhances the lives of young people up to today.

Other stations are hardly conceivable because of the brutality of the events they describe: this includes the juxtaposed reports of the humiliation of Jews who are PISSED ON from 1941 and the year 2000 up till today.



Actor Axel Prahl and cabaret artist Murat Topal recording the audio station RUBBER



Writer Klaus Kordon reading from his novel “Julian’s Brother” for the audio station PISSED ON



Young participants of a theatre project for vocational preparation (JobAct) recording a scene for the audio station PARTY

Or the audio station YOU'RE NUTS! with an original quote from Coco Schumann who only survived Auschwitz because he was a member of the camp music-band and was allowed to play in front of the gas chambers: "La Paloma o-he, sooner or later it's over..."

For example the audio station PARTY is intended to inform about the current strategies of right-wing extremists: Just like the National Socialists in the past, the right-wing rock band "Nordfront" combines new lyrics with popular melodies. That is how the party chartbuster "Live Is Life" became the Nordfront hit: "We greet with Heil!" which was downloaded thousands of times.

(The Austrian rock group "Opus" was informed about the misuse of their world hit. Through objections and lawsuits the group has been able to have more than 20 right-wing versions of their world hit removed from YouTube.)

The audio stations TODAY!, REGARDLESS, KISS, DREAM provide material for discussion and inspiration for dealing with each other in a better way.



Die Musiker der Hip-Hop Gruppe „Zeugen der Zeit“ (Foto rechts) komponierten und singen zusammen mit der Kantorin Avital Gerstetter (Foto oben) für die Hörstation TRAUM – auf Deutsch, Englisch und Hebräisch.



Contributors:



Contemporary witnesses f.l.: Dr. Ruth Gross, Ruth Böhge, Inge Schoubyé, Marie-Luise Schmidt-Wigger, Coco Schumann, Isaak Behar, Inge Deutschkron

Over 300 persons, numerous cooperation partners, six classes from different schools and two training facilities contributed to the realisation of the audio guide in German and English for certain periods of time – sometimes for weeks in the form of projects: contemporary witnesses and historians, writers and translators, actors and cabaret artists, musicians and singers, pupils and teachers, audio technicians, graphic designers, photographers and many more:



f.l.: Herbert Grönemeyer (photo: Kepenek), Axel Prahl und Murat Topal (photo: Farys), Marietta Slomka (photo: Sauerbrei), David Kross (photo: Farys)

Inge Deutschkron can be heard, as well as Axel Prahl. Also David Kross and Michael Degen, Elisabeth Trissenaar and Hansi Jochmann, Hartmut Becker, Dietrich Lehmann. The presenters Marietta Slomka (ZDF/heute) and Megan Gay (Deutsche Welle) give an emphatic account of the despotism of National Socialism. Rufus Beck relates the fairy tale of the “Betterfolk”. Herbert Grönemeyer warns about right-wing rock music. Klaus Kordon reads from his young-adult novel “Julian’s Brother” – Tom Schilling relates the English translation. Murat Topal and Martin Buchholz make us laugh and provide food for thought. In addition, actors and actresses from the ensemble of the youth theatre „Grips Theater“ as well as the „Theater der Erfahrungen“ for older citizens are involved.

Musicians from Berlin provide their music for the audio stations of the guided tour: some rock, some beat-box, some hip-hop – in German, English and Hebrew. (All contributors at: hoerpol.de > contributors)



f.l.: Tom Schilling, Avital Gerstetter (photo: Rakete), Schüler der Martin-Buber-Oberschule, Hartmut Becker, Elisabeth Trissenaar (photo: Konietzny)

Statements:



Federal President Joachim Gauck “very much appreciates the fact that HÖRPOL has found many committed collaborators and supporters. Therefore HÖRPOL can make an independent contribution to conserving the knowledge of the crimes of National Socialism as part of living memory and is a reminder for the ones living today”



Lala Süsskind – former president of the Jewish Community Berlin: In HÖRPOL, contemporary witnesses talk about their youth, rave about teenage dreams that were brutally shattered by the holocaust. But HÖRPOL also gives today’s young kids a chance to talk about their multicultural everyday life. Anyone listening to HÖRPOL will not be able to avoid talking to one another.



Rabbi Prof. Dr. Andreas Nachama: “Hörpol is really exemplary because it leads its listeners to the places where things happened or are still happening, and does this in an associative way, in a radio play with contemporary witnesses, with recordings of current music. And I think it will appeal to those who live with these media today, and it may even inspire them to think about history, the present and the future.” (Source: Deutschlandradio)



Head of Department Dr. Ingeborg Berggreen-Merkel – former head official of the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media/BKM: Imparting history to young people and processing contemporary documents that are historically important especially for young people is one of the defined goals of the Federal Government. Minister of State Mr. Neumann as well as myself therefore appreciate projects such as the audio guide developed by you, Mr. Frenz. Your great commitment and the successful realization deserve respect.

Supporters:

HÖRPOL is a project realised by Hans Ferenz (initiator, author, producer, organiser). While the German version was sponsored by the Hauptstadtkulturfonds (Berlin fund for culture), the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, the foundation DFB-Kulturstiftung and many others, the production of the English version was supported by the foundation Stiftung Klassenlotterie Berlin (lottery fund) and the Deutsche Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband Berlin (welfare organisation). The supporting association for the English version of HÖRPOL is the Verband für sozial-kulturelle Arbeit Berlin e.V. (association for socio-cultural work):



Presse- und Informationsamt
der Bundesregierung



Verband für
sozial-kulturelle
Arbeit e.V.

(further supporters: Landesinstitut für Schule und Medien Berlin-Brandenburg (LISUM), Nachbarschaftsheim Schöneberg e.V., DFB-Kulturstiftung, Kulturprojekte Berlin, GEW, Ver.di, cimdata, DER KICKER, track-at-once recording studio and many more)

Contact:

Hans Ferenz – author, journalist, cultural projects

Initiator of HÖRPOL, author, producer, organiser

Contact: 030–2162606, 0170–4815668, kontakt@hansferenz.de, www.hansferenz.de

Homepage: www.hoerpol.de

Photos, banners and QR-Code:



Photos of the studio production (Axel Prah, Tom Schilling, David Kross etc.) for free use, HÖRPOL banners for your website and the QR-Code can be accessed at: hoerpol.de > Press