



COMEDIA Theater resides in a former fire station in the southern part of the inner city, It was opened in summer 2009. From 1982 until 2009 it was situated in a former supermarket at the edge of downtown Cologne – operating under the (unfortunately untranslatable) name "Ömmes & Oimel".

COMEDIA Theater is a unique cooperation of five programme branches which complement each other perfectly. It presents in two venues elaborate productions for children and young people. In addition there is political cabaret and stand-up comedy as well as theatre, dance and concerts, readings and more for audiences of all ages. In addition **COMEDIA Theater** offers model projects for amateurs, for instance acting classes and theatre pedagogical workshops for children and young people.

Selected cooperations with festivals, fringe theatres, the Cologne Philharmonic Orchestra and international cultural institutes. The children's and youth' theatre festival "Spielarten" ("Play Variations") is one more highlight of the work of **COMEDIA Theater**.

COMEDIA Theater is an institution of cultural education for Children and Young People. All its productions are accompanied by an extensive program of introductions, discussions, play or experiment for the young audiences.

Focusing on Children's and Youth' Theatre

Theater for young audiences is the centre of **COMEDIA Theater**.

Each season **COMEDIA Theater** produces four to five new performances for children, teenagers and young adults so that the whole repertory consists of 15 performances for all audiences from age 4 and up. Theatre that is meant to entertain, inform and inspire is characteristic of **COMEDIA Theater**.

For children **COMEDIA Theater** presented in the past season picture book adaptations as "Ellis Biest" ("Elli's Beast"), modern child-oriented versions of significant works of world literature like "Romeo and Juliet" and contemporary plays by European writers like "A Spell of Cold Weather" by Charles Way or "Zus en Mathilde" ("Sisters") by Theo Franz.

For adolescents **COMEDIA Theater** stages plays which deal with the reality of the lives of young people. So the repertory consists of contemporary plays as well as commissioned work and adaptations of classical plays. This kind of theatre strives to evoke and provoke questions and discussions rather than give conclusive answers. The plays for adolescents are presented for schools as well as in the evenings as part of the regular repertory. The latest production was the first release of "Schwarze Milch oder Klassenfahrt nach Auschwitz" ("Black Milk or School Trip to Auschwitz") by the renowned Austrian writer Holger Schöber.

The Building

Right from the street your eye is drawn to the black Cube ("Kubus"). This is the recently built part of the newly opened theatre. Its centre is formed by two new venues: the Red Hall for almost 400 spectators and the Green Hall for 180 people. Furthermore the Kubus accommodates secondary rooms like the backstage, cloakrooms for artists and workshops. Its material as well as its form stand for a modern and clear architecture.

Right next to it you will find the historic building. This listed monument was once the fire station South of Cologne. The monument itself is home to a spacious restaurant, rehearsal and course rooms as well as offices. Architect Bernd Oxen's idea was to place the monument and the new building alongside each other as equals. The listed front has been restored. The ground floor still shows some reminders of the old fire station such as former fireman's poles and original wall tiling which underline the historic use of the building.

The upper floor premises have been designed to accommodate rehearsal and training rooms to work with children and young people. The old gymnasium on the top floor has been originally restored and now serves as rehearsal stage for theatre professionals working on the productions of the house. It is but a gap made of glass which links the newly built house with the monument. Altogether the floor area measures 3,800 sq. meters.

The landmark of **COMEDIA Theater** is the newly reconstructed drying and climbing tower of the fire station with a height of 23.7 meters. Here architect Bernd Oxen observes: "The tower has got a special meaning within the building complex. It sets a symbol for the new children's cultural home which can be seen from far away. It is not meant to be a replica but an adaptation of the former drying and climbing tower."