

Exhibition chronicles the history and legacy of the Berlin Wall



Graffiti an der East Side Gallery, 2021 © Gottfried Schenk.

BERLIN.- A new exhibition, presented as a photographic narrative, explores the historical journey of the Berlin Wall, from its days as a symbol of division and suffering to its transformation into a site of awe and remembrance.

On the night of November 9, 1989, images of people dancing on the Wall at Brandenburg Gate captivated the world, marking the end of Berlin's division. In less

than a year, events that once seemed impossible unfolded: the collapse of East Germany's ruling Politburo, the first free elections in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the establishment of an economic and currency union, and the reunification of Germany on October 3, 1990.

Berlin-based photographer Gottfried Schenk documented the Wall's historical milestones and its gradual dismantling. His work captures the evolution of the 161-kilometer structure, originally composed of over 40,000 segments, 186 watchtowers, and 31 checkpoints. While the Wall became increasingly porous after the border opening, the systematic demolition began on June 13, 1990, following a directive from the GDR government. Today, few intact sections remain, with the East Side Gallery, a 1.3-kilometer stretch turned into the world's largest open-air gallery, being the most iconic.

The exhibition, hosted at the Mitte Museum, features Schenk's long-term photographic project "Wall Visitors," showcasing striking anniversary events of the Wall's fall. It also includes the series "The Poetry of Remembrance," celebrating the city's collective memory. Through these works, the exhibition ensures that the legacy of the Wall and its victims endures in public consciousness.