

Press Release

BYE BYE FEST: a fitting farewell for the old Festhalle

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Despite its venerable age, the old Festhalle has been in the limelight once again in recent years. Befitting an institution of its calibre, this site steeped in history will be given a fitting farewell – with the 10-day BYE BYE FEST, which will host spectacular concerts, create countless memories and give exciting insights into the Neue Festhalle during the course of the BEA from 28 April to 7 May 2023.

When the 2023 BEA closes its doors at the beginning of May, this will be the final farewell for the old Festhalle. But this won't be without a fitting send-off: During the course of the 10-day BEA, "Tout Berne" will have the opportunity to revisit the greatest stories of the old Festhalle in a walk-in, interactive BYE BYE CUBE. From boxing matches to handball games, legendary concerts (including The Rolling Stones, AC/DC and Deep Purple) and countless trade fairs and congresses: the old Festhalle has seen and hosted many events that have moved its visitors.

Colourful and iconic: the BYE BYE FEST

A stage will be erected between the pop-up BYE BYE CUBE, with its stand for up to 1,500 people, and the main entrance of the old Festhalle on which a main act will be performing on seven of the evenings in honour of the old Festhalle. And Bern can look forward to some class acts! **Ueli Schmezer**, whose godfather, Mani Matter, is just as significant to the legacy of Bern as the Festhalle, will be performing at the BYE BYE FEST with his band, **MatterLive**. The formidable band interprets Mani Matter's trailblazing chansons from the dialect music scene in a wide variety of styles that make you want to dance along to Matter's clever stories.

MEUTE A (still) relatively unknown band from Hamburg who describe themselves as a techno marching band. Eleven brass band musicians, accompanied by wind instruments and drums, create a euphoric, rich techno sound.

Gentleman and Milky Chance are two acts performing at the BYE BYE FEST that have already thrilled audiences at Gurtenfestival. Gentleman plays captivating reggae right from the heart and Milky Chance stand out thanks to their top-class folktronica-pop that dominates radio stations. Two Swiss bands from the somewhat younger generation are also in the line-up: **Pegasus**, for example, who require little introduction as they have long been part of the local pop elite. Meanwhile, **The Gardener & The Tree** won Best Live Act at the Swiss Music Awards with their indie-folk music shortly before pandemic. A rather special guest is coming to Bern from Italy: **Umberto Tozzi**. You only need to say (or sing) the words “Ti amo” and people will understand the reference.

The BYE BYE CUBE will also have a lot to offer BEA visitors during the day: various nostalgic moments and bar nooks as well as a concrete insight into what’s to come. But what’s even more exciting than the history is the opening that will come for the BEA 2025 after two years of construction: the Neue Festhalle, a space available for cultural events, shows, congresses, trade fairs, sporting events and other events with a capacity of up to 9,000 people. The modern new building will thus play an important role in the national trade fair and event domain.

Valuable collaboration with Gadget abc Entertainment Group

The BYE BYE FEST is the third BERNEXPO event so far in collaboration with Gadget abc Entertainment Group, joining the line-up with rep hip-hop festival SPEX ([Spex Festival 2023 | 21–22 July | Bern](#)) and the big event with “Muse” ([Muse – Gadget](#)). Philippe Cornu, Head of Events at Gadget says: «There is great nostalgia and are also wonderful memories for me when it comes to the old Festhalle, as I helped organise concerts in the old hall for decades. That’s why it’s a special pleasure for me to work with the dedicated team at BERNEXPO again».

The same applies to BERNEXPO’s collaborations with the Bierhübeli Bern and the Gurtenfestival, both local heroes in terms of entertainment – making them a perfect fit for an event site with the possibilities and innovative drive of BERNEXPO. Yesterday’s announcement that the major international event organiser Live Nation has arranged for the US American hard rock band Guns n’ Roses to perform at the BERNEXPO site on 5 July 2023 as part of its world tour demonstrates that BERNEXPO both can and wants to enter into cooperation with a wide variety of event organisers.

‘BYE BYE’ nostalgia, ‘hello’ future!

«After the planned construction period of a good two years, we will see real added value here for the city and region of Bern. A location that, thanks to its flexibility and versatility, offers a wide variety of possibilities for use – this is something Bern has

been missing until now. Prior to the referendum on the funding of the Neue Festhalle BERNEXPO promised to stage more cultural events and concerts. The current programme and new partnerships show that we are already well on our way to fulfilling this promise. We are proud and happy to cooperate with regional, national and international partners,» says BERNEXPO CEO Tom Winter.

The BYE BYE FEST programme

Meute

Friday, 28 April 2023

7.00 p.m. doors open / 8.00 p.m. start / 11.30 p.m. end

Gentleman

Saturday, 29 April 2023

7.00 p.m. doors open / 8.00 p.m. start / 11.30 p.m. end

Ueli Schmezer's kids' concert

Wednesday, 3 May 2023

Afternoon – free for all BEA visitors

Ueli Schmezer's MatterLive

Wednesday, 3 May 2023

7.00 p.m. doors open / 8.00 p.m. start / 11.00 p.m. end

Umberto Tozzi

Thursday, 4 May 2023

7.00 p.m. doors open / 8.00 p.m. start / 11.00 p.m. end

The Gardener & The Tree, support act: to follow

Friday, 5 May 2023

7.00 p.m. doors open / 8.00 p.m. start / 11.30 p.m. end

Pegasus, support act: Maryne

Saturday, 6 May 2023

7.00 p.m. doors open / 8.00 p.m. start / 11.30 p.m. end

Find tickets and up-to-date information at: <https://shop.bernexpo.ch/>

Please address any questions to:

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About BERNEXPO GROUPE

BERNEXPO GROUPE, a live marketing company, stages more than 30 proprietary and guest exhibitions, over 300 congresses and specialist events, as well as event engagements of all sizes every year – in person, hybrid and virtual. BERNEXPO GROUPE's live communication approach produces eventful moments, creates space for encounters and offers innovative platforms. The BERNEXPO site is one of the largest exhibition premises in Switzerland: Six exhibition halls in two building complexes have a total of around 40,000 m² of event space and 100,000 m² of outdoor areas. The opening of the Neue Festhalle in 2025 will expand the range of events in the Swiss capital. BERNEXPO GROUPE has a staff of around 100 employees. It achieves gross added value of around CHF 260 million, making the company an important economic driver for the city and region of Bern, as well as a familiar name throughout Switzerland.