



GERMANY: MIRRORING LIVES IN ART

Danube Day in Germany was a day of art and exploration taking place in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, the two federal states in the German part of the Danube Basin. The most northerly Danube town in Europe, Regensburg, was the centre for a colourful and inspiring art extravaganza, with children of all ages getting involved in producing works of art inspired by the Danube.

With the theme for this year's Danube Art Master competition "Celebrating Danube Cultures", children and young people from the upper reaches of the Danube were asked to think about the long journey their river takes through many different lands and cultures across Europe. Inspired by these connections, children got busy creating wonderful objects and works of art that showed the meaning of the Danube to them.

The works of art were gathered together in a colourful and informative exhibition in Regensburg, open to the public between June 25 and 29 and drawing lots of interest from people in the surrounding areas. On June 29, Danube Day was celebrated by bringing together all the young people responsible for this fantastic display of Danube-inspired art, and celebrating their achievements. At a fun awards ceremony, first prize was awarded to a team artwork from class 7e, Secondary School of Parsberg, which was an amazing model of the Danube and its river basin in colourful bas-relief, "Patchwork-Model of the Danube River with Sights". Significant attractions along the river were shown on little photographs mounted on the relief.

Taking the message out even further to schools in the area, Germany this year worked towards joining the Danube Box Initiative, which will provide educational materials to support school projects on the Danube, with an interactive CD-Rom, a booklet, games for the classroom and outdoor activities. Initiated in Austria and developed with the support of Coca-Cola and the ICPDR, this project helps raise awareness of the importance of the Danube and increases children's knowledge of their river.

This year the Regional Council of Tübingen also joined the celebrations which were opened by the Environment Minister of Baden-Württemberg, Ms Tanja Gönner. Close to Sigmaringen, out in the countryside, about thirty people celebrated Danube Day and discussed possible solutions to the problems of river connectivity, the local tourism possibilities on the Danube and much more. The title of the event was "The Upper Danube on its way to Europe" and it focused on the EU Water Framework Directive and the ecological importance of the Danube. The day ended with a fun paddling tour on the river!

In an act of international celebration, Germany joined Austria, Hungary and other Danube countries in the "Greeting the Danube" ships' horn blast. Ships all along the Danube sounded their horns at 2pm to create a wall of sound travelling down the river making clear the connections between all these countries and the importance of the Danube to them all.

**"The Danube is a mirror of our lives:
diverse, constantly changing and solid at the same time"**

Wolfgang Kunert

Head of Government, Administration District Oberpfalz

ORGANISERS AND PARTNERS

Bavarian State Ministry of Environment, Health & Consumer Protection • Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety • Bavarian Water Management Agency of Regensburg • Environment Ministry Baden-Württemberg • Regierungspräsidium Tübingen • Danube-Shopping-Centre, Regensburg • NGO: Aktion lebendige Donau • Paddelfreunde Laiz • local schools