



15 year anniversary of the largest Space Flight Exhibition in Europe

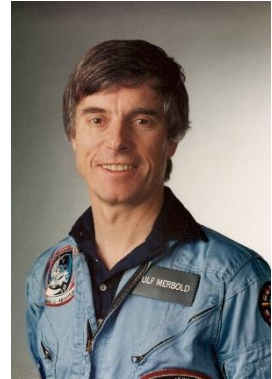
"Apollo and Beyond" celebrates jubilee with famous guests



At 36 m long, the Space Shuttle Buran is the largest exhibit in the "Apollo and Beyond" exhibition. In the foreground (right) is the "Spacelab" module. Source: TMSNHS



ESA astronaut Matthias Maurer in the Cupola on board the ISS during the "cosmic kiss" mission. Source: Gerhard Daum



Ulf Merbold in his flightsuit from the launch and landing of the Spacelab-1 mission. Source: Gerhard Daum

Speyer. The Technik Museum Speyer celebrates several anniversaries on 11th November 2023. Europe's largest space flight exhibition "Apollo and Beyond" was opened 15 years ago with the Soviet space shuttle "Buran OK-GLI" among others. The "Spacelab" on display in the museum is celebrating the 40th anniversary of its first flight, during which ESA astronaut Ulf Merbold embarked on his first mission into space. ESA astronaut Matthias Maurer, who launched his ISS mission on 11th November 2021, will open his exhibition area at the Technik Museum Speyer exactly two years later. The anniversary programme includes talks by Ulf Merbold and Matthias Maurer about their missions as well as a round-table discussion with Maurer, Merbold and exhibition curator Gerhard Daum. The event will take place from 2 pm to 5 pm and is included in the regular museum admission..

The space flight exhibition „Apollo and Beyond“

The unique exhibition "Apollo and Beyond" celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. Since its opening in 2008, it has taken millions of visitors into the fascinating world of space travel, showcasing some of the most amazing milestones and personalities in space exploration. Covering an area of over 5,000 square metres, the exhibition features about 700 unique exhibits documenting the history of space travel from its beginnings in the early 1960s to the current International Space Station (ISS).

The centrepiece of the exhibition is undoubtedly the imposing Soviet space shuttle "Buran OK-GLI", the counterpart to the US space shuttle "OV-101", which amazes visitors. In addition to the hundreds of impressive exhibits, more than half of which have flown in space and some to the moon, "Apollo and Beyond" also had the privilege of welcoming some of the most renowned astronauts in history. Guests have included 63 flown astronauts and cosmonauts to date, including four moonwalkers. Probably the most famous was Buzz Aldrin, who represented humanity in one of its most memorable missions when he landed on the moon for the first time. The personal insight into space exploration never fails to captivate visitors. The exhibition also had the honour of welcoming ESA astronaut

Alexander Gerst. His commitment to international cooperation and his exciting first-hand talks have already attracted a large number of visitors to the Technik Museum Speyer on two occasions.

Another highlight of "Apollo and Beyond" is the impressive moon rock, which was formed 3.34 billion years ago and chipped off a boulder during Apollo 15 (the fourth moon landing). This invaluable exhibit gives visitors a unique opportunity to experience and understand the universe up close.

Career of Ulf Merbold

Ulf Merbold was born on 20 June 1941 in Greiz in Thuringia. He began his physics studies in West Berlin and completed his diploma in Stuttgart in 1968. He received his doctorate in 1976. In April 1977, the then German Research and Testing Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics (DFVLR) was looking for experimenters for the Spacelab space laboratory, whereupon Ulf Merbold applied. The European Space Agency (ESA) was looking for applicants to set up its first European Astronaut Corps. A total of around 2,000 scientists submitted their applications - about 700 of them from Germany. In July 1978, three candidates were selected, including Ulf Merbold. In autumn 1982, Merbold was chosen. Ulf Merbold took part in the maiden flight of the European space laboratory Spacelab, the STS-9 "Spacelab 1" (SL-1) mission, from 28 November to 8 December 1983 as a payload specialist. A total of 73 scientific experiments were carried out. Ulf Merbold was the first non-American to fly into space aboard an American spacecraft. In 1992, Merbold flew his second Spacelab mission (STS-42). After coordinating the scientific aspects of the second German Spacelab D-2 mission, Ulf Merbold began training for the EUROMIR 94 mission in Moscow in August 1993. In 1994, he flew as a scientific cosmonaut on the Soyuz TM-20/TM-19 "EUROMIR-94" mission. Ulf Merbold spent a total of 49 days, 21 hours, 38 minutes and 3 seconds in 795 Earth orbits in space during his three missions.

Career Matthias Maurer

Matthias Maurer was born on 18 March 1970 in St. Wendel in Saarland. In 1996, Matthias Maurer graduated with an engineering diploma in materials technology from the European School for Materials Technology and in 1998 with two further engineering diplomas in materials science and materials technology from Saarland University. In 2004, Dr.-Ing. Matthias Maurer received his doctorate in materials science from RWTH Aachen University. Matthias Maurer took part in the selection process for the next generation of ESA astronauts in 2008/2009 and passed all the selection tests, making it into the final top ten applicants. Back in 2010, he started working for ESA at the European Astronaut Centre (EAC) in Cologne as an Astronaut Support Engineer and Eurocom. In July 2015, Matthias Maurer was accepted as a member of the European Astronaut Corps at the EAC and began his basic astronaut training (ASCAN), which he successfully completed in 2017 and received his astronaut diploma. At the end of 2020, Matthias Maurer was officially appointed as a flight engineer for his first long-term mission to the International Space Station ISS

called "cosmic kiss". Matthias Maurer launched on his first long-term mission to the ISS on 11 November 2021. During his stay on board the ISS, Matthias Maurer worked on more than 35 European and numerous international scientific experiments ranging from basic research and human health to application-oriented science in areas such as life sciences, materials science, physics, biology, medicine or Earth observation for the benefit of life on Earth and the future of space exploration. On 23 March 2022, it carried out its first extravehicular activity (EVA) in support of assembly, renovation and maintenance work on the International Space Station. On 6 May 2022, Matthias Maurer landed with the SpaceX Dragon Crew-3 capsule "Endurance" in the Gulf of Mexico in Florida shortly after midnight.

Matthias Maurer was the 13th German in space during his "cosmic kiss" mission. He spent a total of 176 days, 2 hours, 39 minutes and 53 seconds in space at 2832 Earth orbits and performed an extravehicular activity (EVA) lasting 6 hours and 54 minutes.

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About the Technik Museen Sinsheim Speyer – from underwater into space

Supported by the non-profit club Auto + Technik Museum e. V. and based on the motto "for fans from fans", the Technik Museen Sinsheim Speyer have more than 4,000 members worldwide. The financing is exclusively based on admission fees, donations as well as membership fees of club members. All surpluses are used for the museum's maintenance and expansion. On an area of more than 200,000 sqm, the Technik Museen Sinsheim Speyer present more than 6,000 exhibits from all fields of technological history in a worldwide unique variety. The exhibits range from submarines to vintage cars, from the Concorde to the Space Shuttle BURAN. Besides the permanent exhibition and the changing special exhibitions, there are numerous vehicle and club meetings as well as events. Open 365 days a year, the museums attract over one million visitors a year. Our two IMAX large-format cinemas are a true highlight. While the IMAX 3D cinema in Sinsheim – "the cinema with the highest resolution in the world" – shows exclusive documentations and the latest Hollywood blockbusters, films are projected onto a giant dome in the IMAX DOME cinema in Speyer.

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