

## **The Magi. Legend, Art and Cult**

**Special exhibition at the Museum Schnütgen, Cologne**

**25 October 2014 – 25 January 2015**

Throughout the year 2014, everything in Cologne revolves around the Magi, whose remains were translated to the city in the summer of 1164. During the Middle Ages, their relics transformed Cologne into a pilgrimage metropolis, and they became the patron saints of Cologne together with St. Ursula and St. Gereon. This is still in evidence today in the Shrine of the Magi at Cologne Cathedral, Cologne's coat of arms with the three crowns and numerous works of art throughout the city.

However, even before they became significant for the city of Cologne, the Magi had long stirred large parts of the Christian world. Thus it was the Three Wise Men, who, according to a biblical account, were led by a star to Bethlehem, where they were the first to recognise the Christ child as the Son of God.

The Museum Schnütgen is holding a large special exhibition in celebration of the 850th anniversary and, by choosing the Magi as its theme, is focusing on a subject that has been central to art for centuries. On exhibit are approximately 130 loans from around 70 collections and museums in Europe and New York and artworks from the museum's own collections. Artistically exceptional ivories, sculptures, panel paintings, manuscripts and works of treasury art that offer a particularly interesting interpretation of the subject serve as a bridge from the 3rd through to the 16th century.

Early Christian tombs, magnificent liturgical manuscripts and altar pictures from the Middle Ages clearly illustrate its religious significance. Leitmotifs of the exhibition are the fascination with the star, the royal robes and gifts as well as the journey of the Magi. The development of the pictorial type of the Madonna enthroned is examined, as is the inclusion of donors and secular rulers. One section of the exhibition is exclusively devoted to the theme's special significance for Cologne.

An extensive catalogue has been published for the exhibition; it can be purchased at the museum for the special price of 39 €.

### **The exhibition is supported by:**

RheinEnergie AG, Kölner Kulturstiftung der Kreissparkasse Köln (Cologne Cultural Foundation of the Kreissparkasse Köln), Sparkasse KölnBonn, Sparkassen-Kulturstiftung Rheinland (Cultural Foundation of the Sparkasse Banks of the Rhineland), Peter and Irene Ludwig Foundation, Sal. Oppenheim Foundation, Kulturstiftung der Länder (Cultural Foundation of the Federal States), Kunststiftung NRW (Art Foundation of NRW), Ernst von Siemens Art Foundation, Ministry for Family, Children, Youth, Culture and Sport of the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia, RheinEnergie Stiftung Kultur (RheinEnergie Cultural Foundation), köln cuisine

**Media partners:** Kölnische Rundschau, WDR 3

Ein Museum der



Der Oberbürgermeister

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**Extended opening hours** during the special exhibition:  
Tuesday through Sunday 10 am – 7 pm, Thursday 10 am – 8 pm

Admission 10 €, concession 7 €,  
Combo ticket with cathedral treasury 12 €, concession 8 €.

Guided tours may already be booked now.

Constantly updated information: [www.museum-schnuetgen.de](http://www.museum-schnuetgen.de)