

Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games in Munich's Olympic Stadium (August 26, 1972)

Abstract

The architectural firm Behnisch and Partners designed the “Olympiapark” complex for the 1972 Summer Games in Munich; construction began in 1968. For the roof of Olympic Stadium (shown here) architect Frei Otto designed a suspended, tent-like structure consisting of wire cables and transparent synthetic materials. In choosing Otto's design, Olympic organizers emphatically renounced the architectural tradition of Albert Speer and the kind of monumental structures that had dominated the notorious 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Under the motto “the cheerful Games,” the Federal Republic hoped to use the Munich Olympics as an opportunity to present itself as a new, democratic Germany. The Games, however, were overshadowed by tragedy when eleven members of the Israeli Olympic team were taken hostage by Palestinian terrorists. In the end, all of the hostages and several of the terrorists were killed along with one police officer. The Olympic Games were interrupted for a day but then continued.

Source



Source: Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games in Munich's Olympic Stadium. Date: August 26, 1972. Location: Munich. Photo: Hanns Hubmann. bpk-Bildagentur, image number 00016407. For rights inquiries, please contact Art Resource at requests@artres.com (North America) or bpk-Bildagentur at kontakt@bpk-bildagentur.de (for all other countries).

Recommended Citation: Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games in Munich's Olympic Stadium (August 26, 1972), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:image-2496>> [May 12, 2026].