

History of Berlin-Siemensstadt, Mosaic Hall

Berlin-Siemensstadt: Siemens headquarters, production facilities, and housing units

- Background: Siemens saw no further opportunity to expand within the city limits of Berlin, so it decided to consolidate its far-flung factories and administrative offices in one location outside the city. Beginning in 1897, Siemens acquired over 200 hectares in the Nonnenwiesen open space between Charlottenburg and Spandau. At the start of 1914, the area was officially christened “Siemensstadt” (Siemens City), and by the 1930s, construction was largely complete. Over 70,000 people worked in Siemensstadt by 1935.
- The Nonnendamm features such prominent structures as Kabelwerk Westend (1898), Wernerwerk I (1903), Dynamowerk (1906), Automobilwerk (1906), Eisengießerei (1907), Wernerwerk II (1914), and the Chemisch-Physikalisches Laboratorium (1906) in addition to the Siemens headquarters, constructed between 1909 and 1913. Karl Janisch was hired to oversee the architectural planning. Janisch had taken the time to study production techniques in the United States to help him develop his concept of functional, affordable, worker-friendly plants that could be expanded over the decades. For the Siemens headquarters, Janisch worked with his successor Hans Hertlein, who designed the Schaltwerk tower (1928) and Wernerwerk tower (1930). Karl Janisch and Hans Hertlein are regarded as the fathers of Siemens corporate architecture.
- Construction of the plants went hand in hand with an expansion of transportation infrastructure. Starting in 1922, Siemensstadt grew to include residential buildings representative of a new type of subsidized housing from the modernist school of architecture. The significance of the Siemensstadt Housing Estate led to its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in

2008.

Mosaic Hall at Siemens headquarters in Berlin-Siemensstadt

- The Siemens offices on Nonnendammallee served as the company headquarters from 1914 to 1949, with space set aside for the Managing Board, Supervisory Board, administrators, and the main offices of the Siemens corporate departments. The Hall of Honor (*Ehrenhalle*), known today as the Mosaic Hall (*Mosaikhalle*), offered a venue suitable to receiving customers and guests of the state from around the world. The mosaic floor was created in 1913 by the Expressionist artist Cesar Klein, who had co-founded the *Neue Secession* in Berlin in 1910 and was later prohibited from painting or teaching by the National Socialist regime in 1933.
- The original dome design was meant to give visiting customers and guests an impression of the international importance of Siemens. The hall drew inspiration from Byzantine church domes and was designed as a double inner courtyard originally consisting of two square rooms with rounded glass domes separated by a barrel vault ceiling. After suffering heavy damage in the Second World War, the Mosaic Hall was rebuilt in simplified form between 1974 and 1976. The two glass domes, which had been destroyed, were replaced by a subceiling in the style of the time.
- A sampling of some of the historical events that have taken place in the Mosaic Hall:
 - Visit of King Fuad of Egypt in 1929
 - Site of the 2nd World Power Conference in 1930 (subsequently known as the World Energy Conference)
 - Memorial service for Carl Friedrich von Siemens, who had headed Siemens since 1919, in 1941
 - Visits by Chancellors Gerhard Schröder in 1999 and Angela Merkel in 2012

Contact for journalists:

Siemens AG, CC Press Office

Karlheinz Groebmair, phone: +49 89 636-35181

E-mail: karlheinz.groebmair@siemens.com