



Press Release

Teddy From Legend to Lifestyle

Saturday, 28 February 2026 – Sunday, 31 January 2027

From the earliest examples around 1900 to its rise as a pop-culture icon and sought-after collectors' item, the teddy bear is arguably the world's favourite soft toy. What sets it apart above all is its emotional resonance: far more than a plaything, it is often a loyal companion, a source of consolation and a patient listener.

For over a century, the teddy bear has been at our side through life's ups and downs – as a toy, a cherished object and a collectors' rarity. Yet our fascination with bears goes back much further, as is evident from myths and symbolism. Whether in ancient legends, heraldry or traditions such as Basel's Bärenanzug (Bear Dance), the bear has long stood for qualities such as strength, protection and courage.

This exhibition explores how that enduring fascination with the bear gave rise to a soft toy that went on to enjoy global success. In the "year of the bear" in 1907, a genuine craze took hold, and teddies quickly made themselves at home in children's bedrooms across Europe and the United States.

Before long, the bear – in the guise of Winnie-the-Pooh, Paddington or Baloo – had leapt onto cinema screens and into television. Advertising also seized on its appeal, most famously with the Haribo Goldbear. Today, the teddy is woven into everyday design, appearing on lifestyle products and even on the catwalk, reimagined by brands such as Ralph Lauren and Palm Angels.

The teddy bear appears today in countless forms. Familiar yet continually reinvented, it remains an ever-present and steadfast companion in our lives.

Accompanying programme

Saturday, 28 February 2026, 10 am to 6 pm

Exhibition opening

Bear-face painting and a bear-themed photo booth: step into the role of a bear – augmented reality makes it happen!

Sunday, 30 August 2026, 10 am to 4 pm

Summer fest

Join us for our much-loved summer party, with craft activities, games and plenty of tasty treats. Drop by and bring your friends along!

Teddy cinema

Every first Sunday of the month at 11 am and 2 pm

Craft workshop

Every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, 1:30 pm to 5 pm

Basel Holiday Pass

Register at www.basler-ferienpass.ch

Dates and details will be posted at swmb.museum

You can find the full accompanying program at www.swmb.museum (Events/Calendar)

Further information and images relating to the exhibition

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Images available at: www.spielzeug-welten-museum-basel.ch/de/museum/medien.html

Exhibition texts are available in German, French, English, Italian and in Easy Language. The entire museum is fully accessible for wheelchair users.

Want to stay up to date with our exhibitions, programmes and events? Sign up for our **newsletter** at: news@swm-basel.ch

Admission

CHF 7.–/5.–, no surcharge for the special exhibition

Children and teenagers aged 16 and under enter free.

Children aged 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Opening hours

January to November: Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm

In December: Daily from 10 am to 6 pm

For special opening hours, visit www.swmb.museum

Many thanks for the loans:

Naturhistorisches Museum Basel

Museum Luzern

Naturhistorisches Museum der Burgergemeinde Bern

About Spielzeug Welten Museum Basel

A doll playing shop, teddies in pedal cars racing one another, an entire amusement park springing into motion at the press of a button: with more than 6,000 objects, Spielzeug Welten Museum Basel is unique worldwide in both scope and quality. Housed in a building dating from 1867, it stands in the very heart of Basel. Its cheerful window displays, created with great care and a healthy dose of imagination, are known far beyond the city: they enchant visitors of all ages and invite them to step into a world of wonders. Twice a year, changing special exhibitions on a wide range of themes offer fresh opportunities for cultural discovery. They draw out the unexpected and place the objects in historical contexts that often reveal more than you might think.