

For Immediate Release:



Alle gegen Alles. Punk@50

A Transatlantic Celebration of
Subculture, Protest, and Self-Determination



July 17, 2026 (Los Angeles, CA)

“Punk’s not dead—it just smells funny.” In this irreverent spirit the Goethe-Institut launches **Alle gegen Alles. Punk@50**, a transatlantic, multi-city initiative marking the 50-year anniversary of punk. Coordinated by the Goethe-Institut in **Los Angeles (Luisa Rath-John, Director)** and **San Francisco (Alexander Behrmann, Director)**, the project brings together Goethe-Institutes across the United States and Mexico for a three-month exploration of punk’s enduring legacy and continued relevance today.

Los Angeles institute director, **Luisa Rath-John** says “For me, the connection to punk is something very personal. Growing up in East Germany, the former GDR, punk played a big part in the youth culture that surrounded me. Punk is more than *just* a music genre. It’s a lifestyle, a creative form of challenging the mainstream. And while punk attitudes differ globally, and over time, it still feels to me that it has a strong connective power.”

Emerging in the mid-1970s as a radical subculture defined by opposition, negation, and disruption, punk challenged conventions in music, politics, and everyday life. Half a century later, **Alle gegen Alles** asks: **What role do subcultures play in today’s volatile societies? What defines punk in the present moment?**

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San Francisco Institute director, **Alexander Behrmann** says: „Punk offers a sense of belonging to those who never wanted to belong. There is power in rejecting the mainstream or certain political and economic processes. Can that power still be effective today? We attempt to provide an answer.“

Across participating cities, locally curated programs form the backbone of a larger international dialogue on subculture, protest, and self-determination. Through **exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, and conversations**, the initiative creates spaces for exchange rooted in local scenes.

Touring Sound: German garage-punk band CAVA

And while punk has always been much more than a music genre, no punk project would be complete without a healthy dose of noise. To bring the spirit of **Alle gegen Alles. Punk@50** to the stage, the Goethe-Institut with the support of MAC·LA – Music, Arts and Community Los Angeles have invited the Berlin-based garage-punk band **CAVA** to embark on a tour across the United States and Mexico. Known for their high-energy performances and uncompromising sound, CAVA channels the DIY ethos and rebellious creativity that have defined punk for generations. Through a series of live concerts and special appearances, the band will help transform the project into a living, breathing celebration of punk culture.

Formed in 2020, CAVA released their second album, **Powertrip**, to much critical acclaim in November 2024. They are currently completing production on their third album. Their music blends raw energy with **politically-charged and feminist-informed lyrics**, positioning them at the forefront of a new generation of socially engaged punk artists.

Exhibitions, Talks and more

Alle gegen Alles. Punk@50 features major exhibitions, each accompanied by locally curated public programming:

Los Angeles

- **Tequila Mockingbird's Punk Museum at the Goethe-Institut** exhibits a large collection of punk art and ephemera, opening Aug 27
- **Women in Punk** moderated panel discussion including screening of iconic Public Access Programs (Sep 9).
- Listening Session with **Thomas Venker** (journalist and co-founder of **Kaput Magazin**) and special guests (Sep 30).
- Multi-media documentary exhibition **Survive, Thrive or Die: LA Punk and The Poor Kids on LSD** comes to the space via the *Neighborhood Interpretive Center* (opening Oct 21 TBC).

San Francisco Bay Area

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- An exhibition spotlighting punk from San Francisco's sister city Kiel, Germany, building on the Kunsthalle zu Kiel's show **Kein Kiel** (opening Sep 1).
- Complemented by the tour diary of **Cecilia Kuhn**, drummer of the influential feminist punk band **Frightwig**, documenting their 1985 tour through Germany.
- Conversation with **Andy Schwarz** and **Tina Sanudakura** of seminal German Post-Punk Band **NO MORE**
- Screening and Q&A with **Felix Bundschuh**, writer and director of the documentary series **Millennial Punk**.

Chicago

- An exhibition in collaboration with the Chicago art space **KIOSK** exploring the intersections of punk, outsider music, and self-taught art featuring German and Chicago-based artists.
- Accompanied by film screenings, discussions, and other public programs that draw connections to the legacy of **Wesley Willis**, punk music in Germany, and Chicago's local DIY histories.

Washington, DC

- Listening Sessions (Sep 22) with **Thomas Venker** (journalist and co-founder of *Kaput Magazine*) and **Tony Pence** (Baltimore's Celebrated Summer Records), partnering with **EUNIC** – the EU's National Institutes of Culture as part of *The Art of Freedom* project
- DIY Night in the **DC Public Library Punk Archive** (Sep 23).
- Dischord Records Listening Session (Sep 24) with Thomas Venker and Dischord Records artist.
- DCPL Punk Archive "Pop-up Museum" & Collection Night (Nov 14) Community archive activation and collection night in collaboration with the DC Public Library / BYO punk materials to display, archivists will be ready to scan collectibles

New York

- Exhibition dedicated to **Alfred Hilsberg**, founder of the seminal **ZickZack** label, including a near-complete early vinyl catalog, Sabine Schwabroh's photographic documentation, Hilsberg's Super 8 films, and original posters and flyers.

Boston

- Programs planned in conjunction with local arts and community partners at both exhibition and live performance spaces.

Houston

- Films and additional programs in cooperation with the **Museum of Fine Arts Houston**

Mexico City

- Exhibition and program in collaboration with **Museo Universitario del Chopo**, including concerts, workshops, film screenings, activities for children, panel discussions, and a transnational editorial project.

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- Workshop *Hackear la moda*, the *Infancias Punk* program
- a Mexico-Germany fanzine in collaboration with the *Fanzinoteca del Chopo*, which seeks to make visible the connections between the punk scenes of Germany, Mexico, and Central America.



Film screenings and online resources

A curated Punk film series is digitally accessible on **Goethe-on-Demand** and includes titles such as the award-winning documentary ***B-Movie: Lust & Sound in West-Berlin*** (Germany, 2015) or the striking portrayal of the East German music scene ***whisper & SHOUT*** (*flüstern & SCHREIEN*, GDR, 1988). More on gegenueber.goethe-on-demand.de.

In-person film screenings will be part of the **20th German Currents Film Festival** (Oct 08 – 13), a coproduction of the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles and the American Cinematheque. Punk films can also be seen during the **25th Festival de Cine Alemán** (Sep 24 – Oct 3) organized by the Goethe-Institut Mexico in cooperation with the UNAM Film Archive. Additional film programs will be accessible at select Goethe-Institutes and partner theatres.

In cooperation with ***Kaput - Magazin für Insolvenz & Pop*** the Goethe-Institut's **Gegenüber Magazine** will dedicate one entire issue to the celebration of punk. *Gegenüber* is the digital magazine of the Goethe-Institut in North America, available in English, German, Spanish, and French and available at goethe.de/gegenueber.

Additionally, a punk podcast produced in collaboration with **dublab radio** and host **Annett Scheffel** brings together diverse voices for a transatlantic perspective on the genre.

About the Project

Alle gegen Alles. Punk@50 is a transatlantic collaborative project of the Goethe-Institutes in the United States and Mexico, led by the Goethe-Institutes in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Marking the 50th anniversary of punk, the project brings together exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, and discussion formats in a polyphonic dialogue on subculture, protest, and self-determination. Developed in close collaboration with local partners, it fosters a vibrant network that connects historical perspectives with contemporary artistic positions – demonstrating that punk continues to resonate as both an attitude and a catalyst for social debate and engagement.

Project Dates: August–November 2026

About the Goethe-Institut

The Goethe-Institut is the Federal Republic of Germany's cultural institute, active worldwide. With 154 institutes in 100 countries, it promotes knowledge

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of the German language, fosters international cultural cooperation, and conveys a contemporary image of Germany. Through collaborations with partner organizations in numerous other locations, the Goethe-Institut has a total of approximately 1,000 locations worldwide.



Online

goethe.de/usa/punk50

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CAVA (©Tobias Lamp)

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