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The Council of Europe Museum Prize goes to the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum – Kulturen der Welt (Cultures of the World) in Cologne, Germany.

The Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum is a century-old institution that has recently moved to a new building and has developed a groundbreaking new exhibition on World Cultures. Looking for a new mode of presenting its rich collections, the museum has rejected the traditional geographic division of content and has opted instead for a thematic presentation. As a result, new content, interpretation and design solutions have been developed that open up new possibilities and set a new paradigm for museums of anthropology and ethnology worldwide.

As the Judges of the European Museum of the Year 2012 Panel have observed, *'the museum demonstrates its commitment to serve its multicultural public – adults and children alike – both in its exhibitions and in numerous festivals and educational activities. All visitors will find something to admire and reflect upon. The museum serves as a window on world cultures but also, and predominantly, describes how cultures are formed and how they perceive one another, through exposure to one another. The museum holds up a mirror to prejudice and takes its visitors on a journey, which is simultaneously beautiful, exciting, clever and sophisticated. The museum maintains an open and inclusive policy, aimed at bridging cultures and transcending social and political borders. Its creative use of cutting-edge information and communication technology establishes the conditions necessary to ensure access by the widest public possible'*.

The Council of Europe Museum Prize has been awarded since 1977, in collaboration between the Council of Europe and the European Museum Forum. Museums of any type and size, from the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, are eligible for the prize. The Winner receives a trophy, a Joan Miró bronze statuette, entitled *"La femme aux beaux seins"*, which stays with the museum for one year.

The Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum was one of 59 museums considered by the Judging Panel for the European Museum of the Year Award 2012 (EMYA), an award scheme operated by the European Museum Forum. According to the procedure, this museum was one of three shortlisted candidates submitted by the EMYA 2012 Judging Panel to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The Committee made the final decision to award the 2012 Council of Europe Museum Prize to the Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum.

The Winner of the European Museum of the Year Award 2012, as well as the winners of the other awards and prizes in the EMYA scheme, will be announced at the EMYA 2012 Award Ceremony, which is to be held as part of the European Museum Forum Annual Assembly. The EMF Annual Assembly and EMYA 2012 Award Ceremony will take place in Penafiel, Portugal, between 16–19 May 2012.

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See also: http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/NewsManager/EMB_NewsManagerView.asp?ID=7237&L=2