



PRESS KIT

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DATE: AUGUST 2019

In this press kit, you'll find different texts about the Miniatur Wunderland, its history, the founders, as well as facts and figures about the exhibition. High-resolution photos and video footage can be downloaded at presse.miniatur-wunderland.com.

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HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Everything started in July 2000: Frederik was visiting friends in Zurich and came across a model railway shop while strolling the small streets of the city one day. Childhood memories were brought back immediately and in no more than a few hours he was on fire with the notion of letting a childhood dream come true. He called his twin brother Gerrit on the very same day, completely throwing him off by stating: "We will build the world's largest model railway exhibition." Gerrit, being more the rational and analytical type, could not believe Frederik was being serious and thought he was pulling his leg. Frederik though, persevering and upbeat by nature, insisted and called another six times before Gerrit finally started to consider his plan. The possibility of turning his hobby into his profession excited him. Still, he remained more reserved and preferred to rely on facts rather than on emotions.



Friends and family also were more than a little skeptical. "Almost anyone we told about our idea thought that we were dreamers who had completely lost it", Frederik describing the general reaction back then. His brother Gerrit adds: "They probably would have been more supportive if we had told them, that we were planning to build transport zeppelins, set up a Tamagochi exhibition or design new fax machines. For a long time model railroading had the reputation of being old-fashioned and something for loners."

Therefore, it was clear from the start that a successful model railway had to be something completely different and very special. An online survey consisting of 45 partly existing and partly made-up sightseeing attractions of Hamburg revealed that the 'largest model railway in the world' ranked very high amongst men, but last amongst women. These results helped form the basic strategy of Miniatur Wunderland: No distant museum like layout behind glass panes, but a lovingly modeled miniature world with trains being only one of the many highlights. "We wanted to build a world that would amaze and inspire men, women and children alike", Gerrit Braun explains.

Together with their father, Jochen Braun, and their long-time partner, Stephan Hertz, they founded Miniatur Wunderland. They chose the 'Speicherstadt', the Historic Warehouse District, as a suitable location which still lay within the boundaries of the free port at that time, thus being separated from the rest of Hamburg. Gerhard Dauscher became the creative or rather modeling director, swapping Bavaria for Hamburg.

The first draft, considered to be more than sufficient, consisted of 20 employees responsible for constructing and running the exhibition, 100,000 visitors per year and a loan of 2,000,000 Deutsche Mark. However, before the opening on August 16, 2001, the number of employees had already risen to 40 and the expenses had increased considerably, as well.

Miscalculation at its best: Within the first year, the expected number of visitors had tripled to 300,000. It really was the beginning of a fairy tale and things just keep getting better: In the past year 2018, around 1.4 million visitors came to see the world's largest model railway, making it one of the most successful exhibitions in Europe.

On the next page you will find the most important milestones.



13th July 2000	Birth of the idea in Zurich
September 2000	Signing of the rental agreement
1st November 2000	Move in to the warehouse at Kehrwieder 2
15th November 2000	Start of the construction of the first section with 20 employees
16th August 2001	Opening of Miniatur Wunderland with 40 employees
27nd November 2002	Opening of the Hamburg section
3rd February 2003	The 1,000,000th guest visits Miniatur Wunderland
8th December 2003	Opening of the USA section
2004	Miniatur Wunderland's team consists of more than 100 employees
13th July 2005	Opening of the Scandinavia section
6th April 2006	Gerrit and Frederik Braun are awarded 'Entrepreneurs of the Year' in Hamburg
13th November 2007	Opening of the Switzerland section
Spring 2008	Official construction start of the Airport section
16th July 2008	Wunderland welcomes the 5,000,000th visitor
30th September 2008	Opening of the exhibition 'A City Divided'
1st January 2010	Miniatur Wunderland gains 800 m ² of floorspace – expansion is secured
4th May 2011	Opening of the Airport section
16th August 2011	Celebrating the 10th birthday
26th April 2012	Opening of the special exhibition 'The History of our Civilization'
17th July 2012	Opening of the new entrance and restaurant area on the 2nd floor
Autumn 2012	Miniatur Wunderland wins the German Tourism Award
14th November 2012	Start of construction on the HafenCity and Elbphilharmonie
5th December 2012	Welcoming the 10,000,000th visitor
13th November 2013	Opening of the HafenCity and Elbphilharmonie
2014	The Wunderland video reaches 20 million views and the Facebook page has over 1,000,000 likes
4th December 2014	After an inaugural ceremony, the tent of the musical 'The Lion King' is now part of the layout
10th September 2015	Guinness World Records officially announces Miniatur Wunderland as world's largest model railway
11th November 2015	Helene Fischer and Miniatur Wunderland recreate a charity concert and donate more than 600,000 Euros
January 2016	Wunderland is now part of Google Street View as the smallest location on earth
28th September 2016	Opening of the Italy section
5th October 2016	Miniatur Wunderland becomes the most popular German tourist destination, voted for by foreign guests online at the German National Tourist Board
2nd December 2016	The 15,000,000th guest visits Miniatur Wunderland
2nd February 2017	1,000,000 take-offs and landings at Knuffingen Airport
12th April 2017	250th circumnavigation of the earth by the model railway (10,000,000 kilometres)
17th November 2017	Publication of Frederick and Gerrit Braun's biography 'Kleine Welt - großer Traum' (Little world, big dream)
February 2018	The website www.miniatur-wunderland.com gets a new design
21st February 2018	Opening of the Venice section
April 2018	Integration of the show of famous comedian 'Otto Waalkes' as push button action in the Hamburg section





FREDERIK BRAUN

Frederik Braun, twin brother of Gerrit Braun, was born on the 21st of December 1967. From early on he and his brother Gerrit started dreaming of great projects together. Initially, he dreamt of childish things such as the world's largest Mickey Mouse comic collection or a huge collection of autograph cards of sports stars. However, his dreams changed with puberty. From then on he dreamt of his own nightclub and his own record label. Sometime in the year 2000 an entirely new dream emerged: The dream of the world's largest model railway. Frederik has never been someone to live in his dream world. He has always been someone who is set on making his dreams come true, so he began working on his dream aged just 11. That is exactly when he found his perfect partner, but also the most forceful antagonist for his ideas: His twin brother Gerrit, the person who, at the same time, is the closest and the most opposite to him. Frederik is more of an optimistic, emotional and short tempered guy, compared to Gerrit, the pessimistic, rational and analytical type. Frederik's ideas had to pass Gerrit's sharp judgement. Most of the ideas were scrapped after detailed analysis, turning out to be too unrealistic. However, whenever an idea passed Gerrit's approval, Frederik found the perfect partner in his twin brother. Only five ideas passed Gerrit's judgement. The first idea the brothers decided to carry out was Frederik's dream of the largest Mickey Mouse comic book collection in the world. The two went to numerous flea markets and looked for low-priced comic books, selling them on with a profit at other flea markets. They were able to compile a huge collection with their profits.

Following the Mickey Mouse collection, the autograph card collection was next, followed later on by their own nightclub and the record label. For 10 years they ran one of the most successful clubs of the 90's – the 'Voilà' in Hamburg. With the millennium coming to an end, Frederik had many new ideas. He was sure that he didn't want to grow old working in the nightlife business, and so he tried to convince Gerrit with many ideas for a fifth enterprise. For many years all of Frederik's attempts were in vain. Then, one day in summer of 2000, suddenly everything became clear to Frederik. He had found his life's dream. He knew that Gerrit would probably think he is insane when he told him about his plan to build the largest model railway in the world.

But by that time he had already had many years of experience dealing with „Judge Gerrit the Merciless“. So, he prepared a strategy to convince his brother, and succeeded. The rest is documented in Miniatur Wunderland's history.





GERRIT BRAUN

Gerrit Braun, twin brother of Frederik Braun, was born on the 21st of December 1967, a few minutes before Frederik. From early on he developed his traits of responsibility and his protective instinct. His brother Frederik always bombarded him with many, sometimes rash ideas, and so he wanted to protect his younger brother from the all too risky undertakings. However, just like his brother, Gerrit has the ability to dream and to look into the future. Being mathematically talented, it was clear to him that, due to probability calculations, he only had to bide his time and wait for Frederik to come up with a promising idea. All he had to do is be patient and convince his brother, in a rational way, that all other ideas would not be feasible.

Gerrit succeeded in refuting his brother's ideas until they were 12. Then Frederik came up with the idea of compiling a huge Mickey Mouse comic book collection financed with the profits of other comic book sales. Gerrit couldn't find any reasonable argument to oppose the project, and so he started coming up with a plan. With this project Gerrit's talent and specialty became apparent at an early age. He developed the strategy and carefully analyzed every step of the way. Both would remain his responsibility tasks in the projects which ensued, such as the nightclub and the record label. In the meantime, he had developed another of his talents – his technical skills.

Already in his days at school, Gerrit was busy constructing different gimmicks, such as an igloo made of cigarette packs, or a model railway which was technically very advanced back then. After graduating high school he began studying business informatics while managing the nightclub Voilà. In the following years his technical all-round-talent emerged more and more. Thus, he developed an innovative software system for gastronomy accounting, which is still being used today, as well as tools used for time measurement in motorsports.

When Frederik told him about his idea of building the largest model railway in the world, Gerrit concluded, after careful analysis, Frederik had found his lifetime dream as well. He quickly realized that there were many development possibilities to create a world never seen before. Gerrit agreed to join in, and in the months and years which ensued, he developed the wide range of technology (Car System, lighting control, ship navigation system, airport, etc.) that makes Miniatur Wunderland so unique. For some years now, the complicated Formula 1 technology for the Monaco section has also been one of Gerrit's great challenges. Slowly, however, the dream of fast Formula 1 races is coming closer...





STEPHAN HERTZ

Stephan Hertz and Gerrit Braun have known each other since high school days. They found that they had so much in common that they didn't only work in the same company, but spent their free time together as well: For a couple of summers in a row, they took Gerrit's CJ7 Jeep and drove down from the Hanseatic City of Hamburg to the French Riviera. To this day they have many fond memories of these trips. This is why the Provence section of the exhibition that is going to be constructed next to Italy and Monaco, is really close to the heart of France enthusiasts Stephan and Gerrit.

It was a rather small step from planning road trips to foreign countries to event and party planning in their hometown of Hamburg. Stephan quickly started taking part in Frederik's projects and found himself stuck in the middle of the two brothers, in a sort of intermediary role: Being neither as emotional as Frederik nor as skeptical as Gerrit, he just went about taking on the challenges and plans. The first highlight of their close teamwork was the acquisition of the nightclub 'Voilà'. But after more than ten years of nightlife, Stephan realized that he didn't want to spend the rest of his life in the dark.

Thus, Frederik's idea of building the largest model railway in the world came exactly at the right time. Stephan had to sleep on it but was quickly convinced that this enterprise couldn't be anything but a success. He loved thinking of the childhood days when the model railway was a family project: Father and son would be tend the tracks, switches and trains, while his mother would be building the houses and landscapes. Being perfectionists they didn't keep the first analogue Märklin track for long, but soon refurbished it entirely. As it was, Miniatur Wunderland really was a childhood dream come true for the third partner, too.

Today, Stephan is mainly responsible for the optimal representation of Miniatur Wunderland on various internet platforms as well as for the homepage www.miniatur-wunderland.com. In case of www.miniatur-wunderland.com 'online emergencies', Stephan is the fire fighter (like the small Preiser figures in Knuffingen) who makes sure that the online information is available for our visitors twenty-four-seven.



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

AREA

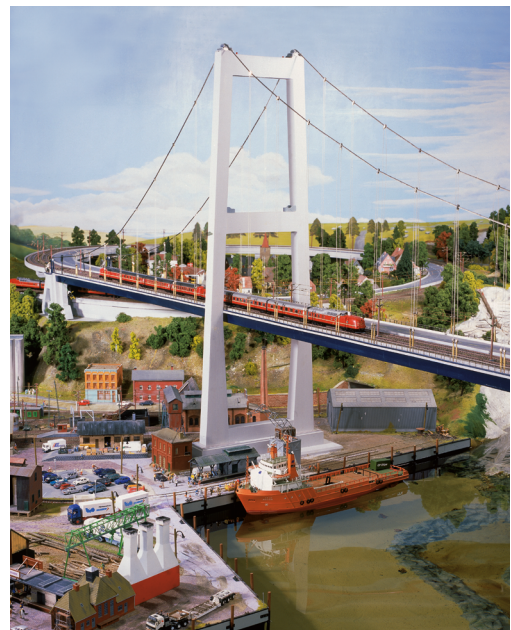
Floor space Miniatur Wunderland	7.000 m ²
Layout size	1.499 m ²
Sections	9

CONSTRUCTION TME

Construction time	923.000 working hours
Construction cost	35 million Euros
Staff members	360

EXHIBITION DATA

Length of railway tracks	15.715 meters
Trains	1.040
Wagons	more than 10.000
Longest train	14.51 meters
Signals	1.380
Switches	3.454
Computer	50
Push-button activities	210
LEDs	389.000
Buildings	4.340
Figures	263.000
- of which handmade	more than 15.000
Cars	9.250
- of which moving	280
Planes	52
- of which flying	42
Ships	467
Trees	130.000
Water	30.000 liters



THE FUTURE OF MINIATUR WUNDERLAND

FUN FAIR

Opening date	November 2019
Construction period	April 2019 to November 2019
Construction time	ca. 20.000 hours
Layout size	9 m ²
Figures	ca. 15.000
LEDs	ca. 100.000
Attractions & Food Stands	ca. 150

MONACO & THE PROVENCE

Opening date	End of 2020
Construction period	May 2018 to end of 2020
Layout size	63 m ²
Figures	ca. 50.000
LEDs	more than 10.000
Trees	more than 20.000
Trains	ca. 50

SOUTH AMERICA — RIO | PATAGONIA | RAIN FOREST | IGUAZÚ | PERU | BOLIVIA | CHILE

Opening date	End of 2021
Layout size	ca. 200-220 m ²
Construction time	190.000 hours
Track length	ca. 1.600 meters
Buildings	ca. 500
Trains	ca. 115
LEDs	ca. 50.000
Trees	ca. 15.000
Figures	ca. 30.000

THE WORLD FROM ABOVE

Opening date	End of 2021
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THE FUTURE OF MNIATUR WUNDERLAND | CONTINUED

CENTRAL AMERICA & THE CARRIBEAN

Opening date	End of 2023
Layout size	ca. 140-160 m ²
Construction time	30.000 hours
Track length	ca. 1.100 meters
Buildings	ca. 300
Trains	ca. 180
LEDs	ca. 40.000
Trees	ca. 15.000
Figures	ca. 25.000

ASIA PART 1

Opening date	End of 2026
Layout size	ca. 150 m ²

THE FUTURE FROM 2027 ONWARDS

There has never been a lack of ideas in Wunderland. Whether we build more parts of Asia or Africa, perhaps England, the Netherlands or something completely different, we don't want to decide yet. One thing is certain: The real world offers so much inspiration and as far as we're concerned, we will never stop building.



MINIATUR WUNDERLAND BUILDS BRIDGE ACROSS THE CANAL AND CROSSES ATLANTIC OCEAN.

Roughly 10 million Euros will be invested in new sections/Wunderland builds South America in Argentina

This August Miniatur Wunderland will turn 18 – for German standards this is legal age. About time to ponder the future. And, as seems typical behavior for most nearly 18 year olds, the future is very different from what had been planned years ago.

In March, a new lease was signed for the extension of Miniatur Wunderland. Another 3000 square meters will be added on the other side of the canal.

Monaco/Provence is currently under construction, momentarily they are the last sections in the original building. For this section Gerrit Braun is working on a completely new technique with his team. The idea is to create a miniature Formula 1 race track via scalable magnetic fields. The results are still open. "A miniature Formula 1 race track is the technically most challenging project in the history of the Wunderland so far, aside from our airport. We managed to run the first Bolides on a test run. We are still a long way from depicting complete Formula 1 races with different driving characteristics and overtaking maneuvers", says Gerrit Braun. The grand opening is planned for November 2020.

Before then a smaller section, rich with details, will be opened on 9 square meters: a new fun fair. The original fair, built in 2001 for the opening of the Wunderland, will now be redesigned and doubled in size. New rides, roughly 100.000 LEDs and many technical gadgets will become the highlight in one of the initial sections of the Wunderland. The grand opening for the fun fair is scheduled for November 2019.

The most spectacular project though is the extension of the exhibition. Originally planned for the other side was a section depicting England. This idea has been replaced by the Wunderland's largest adventure so far: "You could say we have already accomplished our Brexit", says Fredrik Braun with a smirk, adding: "By now 25 percent of our visitors come from abroad. To many of them, Europe looks alike: Old houses, small towns, meadows, fields, forests and the occasional mountain. Therefore we decided to create completely new worlds. We are starting by building South America. The idea came to us in New York where we met a, and I mean this is in the most positive way, completely crazy Argentinian family."



PRESS RELEASE | CONTINUED

The vision to build South America with these great South Americans in South America was born in 2017. The South American continent is very different from Europe. Where there is much light and civilization in Europe, in South America there is the opposite. Here you can find the last unexplored parts of the world in the Amazon delta and there are myths, massive nature and extremely buzzy cities. It is hardly possible to authentically depict this from a workshop thousands of kilometers far away and so far we (luckily) don't have Google Maps for the Amazon or the Antarctic.

Therefore we have been building with the Martinez family for the last year in a suburb of Buenos Aires. So far this is the most venturesome project in the history of Wunderland. Wunderland model builders are working with a team of 15 South Americans to create this new spectacular section. For the first phase of construction 200 square meters have been plotted, depicting the Amazon and the Andes, Rio and the Antarctic. "The South America project is both adventure and fairy tale. The family father, Ricardo Martinez, a model building enthusiast and drummer by profession, discovered a documentary about Miniatur Wunderland back in 2002 via Deutsche Welle. He videotaped it to repeatedly replay it for his four children over the years. His children were raised with this footage and our YouTube channel. They always wanted to see Miniatur Wunderland and now we are going together on an expedition into the unknown", Gerrit Braun explains.

Parallel to the South America section a new and very special section is under construction in Hamburg. On their way into the new building the visitors may view the world from a bird's perspective. The exhibition "the world from above" will depict the earth's most beautiful places from the perspective of a low flying airplane. A sum of 10 million Euros will be invested into the new sections over the next years.

"A new and exciting phase is starting for us. The past years we have been building and enlarging our exhibition section after section. Now we are traveling new roads and embarking on a great adventure. I don't know if everything will work out the way we have dreamt it to be. Our aspiration has always been to outperform ourselves and to surprise the visitors. In order to accomplish that, you have to leave the road well-travelled and explore new paths into the unknown. I am excited to see the outcome and can hardly wait", says Frederik Braun.

CONTACT

Miniatur Wunderland Hamburg
Sebastian Drechsler
Kehrwieder 2
20457 Hamburg

040 / 300 680 0
s.drechsler@miniatur-wunderland.de
presse.miniatur-wunderland.com



ABOUT MINIATUR WUNDERLAND

Miniatur Wunderland is the world's largest model railway and Hamburg's tourist attraction no. 1. More than 18 million visitors from all over the world have already visited this superlative miniature world. Spreading over 1,499 square meters, a unique and outstanding exhibition arose in 923,000 working hours and it keeps on growing.

Next to sophisticated technologies, Wunderland is known for its captivating richness of detail: 263,000 figures lovingly set in scene, moving cars and ships – even airplanes are taking off and landing at Knuffingen Airport every minute. The Miniatur Wunderland is a breathtaking microcosm unmatched anywhere in this world. And this cosmos continues to grow.

In the following years, a superlative fun fair, the Principality of Monaco and idyllic Provence will be built. And by 2021, the adventurous world of South America will be created on the other side of the canal.



MINIATUR WUNDERLAND – A DREAM COME TRUE

In some social classes model railways are looked at as the embodiment of German philistinism, model landscapes as a run into a parallel universe, and model makers as weird dreamers. That's why it wasn't surprising eighteen years ago, that the idea to construct the largest model railway in the world was frequently sneered at. At that time, if the brothers had voiced that their Miniatur Wunderland would become one of the most famous exhibitions in Germany, will bring hundreds of thousands of overnight stays for the city of Hamburg, and would prompt a boom of model making, doubtful smirks would have turned into loud laughter.

The orchestra of laughter died down more and more after the Grand Opening in 2001, and has completely disappeared at some point. Instead the laughter has turned into songs of praises. "Many people who've not taken us seriously in the beginning, are ardent Wunderland fans and supporters by now", says Frederik Braun regarding this development. This change of mind doesn't seem surprising when taking a plain survey of the figures.

Year after year, Miniatur Wunderland breaks its own visitor records. Around 1.4 million visitors saw the exhibition in 2018. The 18,000,000th visitor was welcomed to Wunderland in September 2018. The installation's overall size grew to just over 1,499 square metres, when the sub-section 'Venice' was completed in 2018. The attraction currently has more than 360 staff members. Thus, Miniatur Wunderland, next to the Alster, musicals, and the harbour, has not only become one of the most important tourist attractions in Hamburg, but also an important employer. From technicians to art students - the whole team is striving to create new dream worlds. The most contrasting characters contribute fragments of their world views to this complex work of art.

"We think that this development is a result of several factors interacting. The exhibition invites its visitors to dream and observe, it reflects a diversity of opinions, and enables the spectator to look at parts of our world from a totally different perspective. It's controversial, yet rarely judges", Frederik Braun explains. 263,000 Miniatur Wunderland 'citizens' have been deliberately staged by many employees. Each one of the model makers is free to develop scenes, and to let personal observations and dreams flow into his work. And thus, in more than 923,000 working hours, a world has been created where socio-critical scenes take place in romantic landscapes, permissiveness exists next to tradition, and reality blends with dreams.

However, not only the creation of a world of its own makes Miniatur Wunderland so unique. Innovative high-technology, which has never been installed in model layouts before, is hidden within and beneath the impressive landscapes. "One of our principles has always been to meet every challenge, no matter how hopeless it seems to be in the beginning. With this attitude we managed to create technology which astounds our visitors", Gerrit Braun adds. For example: 389,000 LED lights, which are dynamically controlled by a self-developed light control system, provide an almost perfect simulation of day and night; 280 computer-controlled cars don't cease to amaze the visitors, and thanks to over 200 push-button actions guests can interact with the tiny Wunderlanders.

In short – Miniatur Wunderland is not only a normal model railway, but a world which invites the visitors in many ways to marvel, dream, and discover.



CONTACT

YOUR CONTACTS	Frederik Braun Sebastian Drechsler
ADDRESS	Miniatur Wunderland Hamburg GmbH Kehrwieder 2 20457 Hamburg
TELEPHONE	+49 (0) 40 300 680 0
E-MAIL	presse@miniatur-wunderland.de
PRESS PORTAL	presse.miniatur-wunderland.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

INTERNET	 www.miniatur-wunderland.com  www.facebook.com/MiniaturWunderlandHamburg  www.youtube.com/user/MiWuLaTV  @miniaturwunderland
OPENING HOURS	Monday 9.30 am – 6.00 pm Tuesday 9.30 am – 9.00 pm Wednesday 9.30 am – 6.00 pm Thursday 9.30 am – 6.00 pm Friday 9.30 am – 7.00 pm Saturday 8.00 am – 10.00 pm Sunday 8.30 am – 8.00 pm Special opening hours on public holidays and during nationwide school holidays.
ADMISSION	Adults: 15 Euro Children (under 16 years): 7.50 Euro Seniors: 13 Euro Students: 11 Euro
TICKETS	Bookable on www.miniatur-wunderland.com/tickets

