

Music

Berliners Rave Against a Motorway Extension Threatening Cultural Venues

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Berliners are up in arms over a proposed motorway extension that would cut through the heart of the city, destroying several cultural venues in its path

Last Saturday, in the eastern Berlin district of Friedrichshain, smoke machines, shiny balls, and refreshment stations were arranged among the road signals and traffic lights, as partygoers, environmentalists, and nearby residents transformed a one-kilometer segment of the prime road into an open-air dance area. It was a protest against the extension of a motorway.

The €1.2 billion project would extend the A100 motorway from the city center to the eastern district of Marzahn-Hellersdorf. It would require the demolition of several buildings, including the iconic Astra Kulturhaus, a popular music venue that has been a fixture of the city's nightlife scene for over 30 years.

Other venues that would be affected by the project include the YAAM, a cultural center for African and Caribbean communities, and the Festsaal Kreuzberg, a former ballroom that is now used for concerts and events.

Opponents of the project say it would have a devastating impact on Berlin's cultural scene. They argue that the city should focus on investing in public transport and cycling infrastructure, rather than building new motorways.

The project has also been criticized by environmental groups, who say it will increase air pollution and noise levels in the city.

The Berlin Senate is expected to decide on the project in the coming months. If it goes ahead, construction is expected to begin in 2023 and be completed by 2028.

In an open letter, residents of Berlin's Lasker-Kieze expressed their displeasure at the recent protest action "Bassen A100 away" as "it was not really in the spirit of environmental

protection".