

**Klaus U. Werner and Monika Diecks, *FU Berlin, Philologische Bibliothek***  
**The Brain**

**Abstract**

In 1997 Sir Norman Foster was asked to design a library building whose purpose is the integration of 10 decentralised libraries of the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities of the Free University of Berlin, now spread all over the campus. It is a compact building with a wide span steel structure covering 5 open floors and an overarching structure with a mix of metal panels and glass elements. The shape of this building is a geometrically curved, oblate cupola with an oval ground plan. On the inside there is a likewise curved textile skin of glass fibre fabric that is responsible for an astonishing space impression. The metaphor for this library-building is the human brain: the dome-shaped building, the inner skin, the brain-like overlapping borders of the upper levels, the clear structure of the building.

Architects	Foster and Partners
Competition	1997
Start library site work	2001
Library finished	Dec. 2004
Net Area	6'290 m <sup>2</sup>
	64 m long / 19 m high / 55 m wide
Library Cost	35 Mio Euro (without shelves and computers)

User facilities:

- 650 user seats
- all readers seats for laptops
- access to the University network (WWW), 50% LAN and Wireless
- LAN within the library
- 40 seats with computers (Thin Clients)
- 1 computer study room with 17 computers
- 1 study room with individual lockers for special readers
- 1 microfilm study room
- newspaper reading area (lobby)
- 2 reading desks with special facilities for visually handicapped users
- 2 reading desks with special facilities for multimedia use
- copying facilities

Collections of the Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities: 700'000 volumes (capacity: 800'000) on open shelves

- Classical studies 90'000,
- Medieval Latin literature 13'000,
- Germanic Studies 185'000,
- Dutch language and literature 30'000,
- English language and literature 80'000,
- French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese 150'000,
- Slavic 70'000,
- South American Studies 45'000,
- Comparative literature 35'000)

Homepage [www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/phibib/en](http://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/phibib/en)

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## **CV**

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### **Monika Diecks**

Born in 1967. 1986-1994 Studies in German, French and Spanish Language and Literature, M. A., 1995-2000 Head Librarian "Institut Français Heidelberg", 1997-1999 post-graduate studies in Library and Information Science, M. A. (LIS), 2000-2002 Subject Librarian Universities Paderborn and Marburg, since 2002 Deputy Librarian of the Philological Library of the Free University of Berlin.