

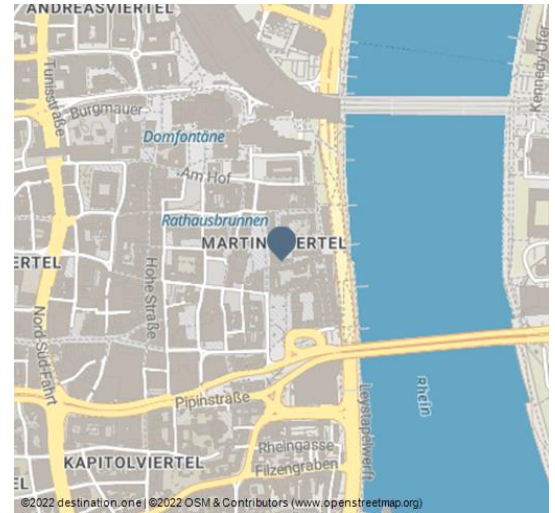


## Tünnes and Schäl statues

Monument



KölnTourismus, Foto: Christoph Seelbach



### The statues in the Altstadt near Alter Markt

Tünnes and Schäl aren't real people — but two bronze life-size statues of them stand in front of Groß St. Martin (Great St. Martin's Church) church in Cologne's Altstadt (Old Town). They give us concrete, hands-on evidence that all over the world the collective human spirit is capable of taking on physical form. Tünnes' nose has been rubbed shiny by the many hands that have touched and rubbed it. That's because his nose is reputed to be a lucky charm.

Tünnes and Schäl are the two legendary cult figures of the Händchen puppet theatre in Cologne. The founder of the first Händchen theatre, Johann Christoph Winters, created Tünnes in 1803, and Schäl joined Tünnes in 1850. Rumour has it that Schäl was created because there was a competing puppet theatre on the Schäl Sick, the "wrong side" (right bank) of the Rhine.

Tünnes is the short form of Antonius in the Rhineland dialect; he's a naïve country bumpkin with a bulbous nose and a tranquil soul. Schäl is thinner and always wears a tailcoat. He's a rascal, often sly and sometimes even underhanded. He considers himself smarter than Tünnes, but he isn't. The word "schäl" has more than one meaning in the local dialect. It refers both to Schäl's squint and to his "bad" or "wrong" behaviour. After all, he's from the Schäl Sick, the "wrong" side of our metropolis on the Rhine.

### Tünnes and Schäl: The caricatures who represent Cologne characteristics

Tünnes is going for a walk on the Rhine Promenade. Suddenly he hears someone shouting, "Help! Help! I can't swim!" Tünnes shouts back, "Do Jeckich, isch kann och net schwemme, ävver deshalb schreie isch endoch net esu." (You idiot! I can't swim either, but I don't go around screaming about it!) There are lots more Tünnes and Schäl jokes in Cologne. In fact, people say "Dat is ne Tünnes!" about someone who's not too bright or a newcomer who has moved to Cologne from the backwoods. By contrast, Schäl is a wannabe city slicker.

The two of them are supposed to represent Cologne types, but they can actually be found in quite a few more cities all through Germany. Tünnes stands for the easy-going Cologne native who's lovable and occasionally foolish. And Schäl shows us the other side of the coin: the cunning, profit-oriented aspect of Cologne's townies. Do they still represent the Cologne people of today? You'll have to answer that question for yourself.

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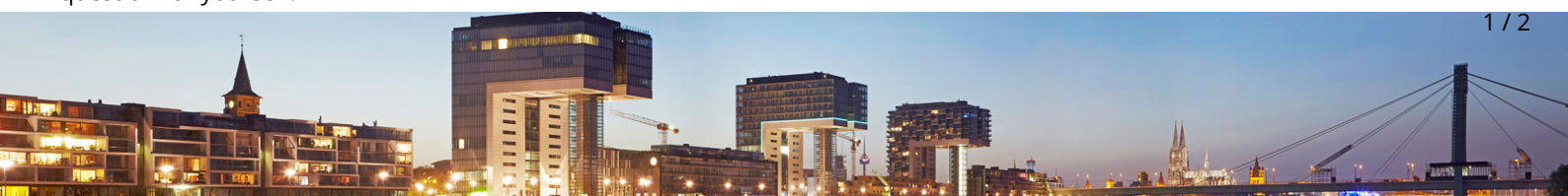
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### Tünnes and Schäl: 40 years in Cologne's Carnival

Before the First World War and in the "Roaring '20s", Tünnes and Schäl gave complementary comic speeches during Carnival in Cologne — and this tradition has been continued, most recently by the brothers Gerd and Karl Jansen. The Jansens have been doing this for 40 years. In addition, Tünnes and Schäl have often been represented in the Carnival parade on "Rose Monday" (Shrove Monday).

#### Other Tünnes and Schäl locations in Cologne

Because Tünnes and Schäl go back such a long way, the two statues in the Old Town are not the only indications of their presence. Tünnes can also be seen on Johann Christoph Winters' memorial stone in the Melaten Cemetery. Tünnes and Schäl have also been immortalized in stone in Cologne's cathedral. If you look at the right side of the pointed arch of the side portal facing the main train station, you can see them there.

Incidentally, Tünnes always likes to drink just one more Kölsch beer, and that's probably what inspired the following story. Schäl sees his friend Tünnes standing morosely at a bar counter and asks him what's wrong. Tünnes answers, "Isch han mi Levve lange nor Bubbewasser getrunken un kann net kapeere, dat isch jetz Wasser en d'r Beinen han sull." (All my life, I've only drunk 'bubble water', and I can't understand why they' now say I've got water on my legs.) For people who're not from Cologne: Bubbewasser is alcohol!



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