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The Jewish Museum Frankfurt, Germany's first Jewish Museum, to be re-opened on October 21, 2020

Germany's first municipal Jewish Museum in Frankfurt am Main (opened in 1988) has been under major construction since 2015 and will finally open its doors on October 21. The new museum complex will be a new landmark of the City of Frankfurt. Complemented by its second venue, Museum Judengasse, the completely renewed Jewish Museum Frankfurt constitutes an extraordinary site of European Jewish heritage. The historical Rothschild-Palais has been thoroughly renovated and complemented with a new, spacious building designed by the prominent Staab architects. The neoclassic palace, a former residential house of the Rothschild family and therefore a historical object in itself, hosts the new permanent exhibition on Jewish Modernity. The new building, gives room for temporary exhibitions, a public library, a multi-functional room for events and workshops, the first dairy kosher deli in a Jewish Museum in Germany and a museum shop for Jewish literature and fine Judaica. The courtyard between the two buildings provides the address of the new museum, Bertha-Pappenheim-Platz 1, and presents an impressive new sculpture by the illustrious Israeli artist Ariel Schlesinger.

Center for Jewish culture in history and in the present

The four mission-dimensions of the new Jewish Museum Frankfurt are: visit, explore, learn and connect. Accordingly, the museum defines itself as a vivid center for Jewish culture in history and in the present. An extensive program of events (discussions, lectures, concerts, film screenings, dinners), educational activities (tours, workshops, creative classes) and a concise digital strategy complements the exhibitions that are being displayed at its two venues. The beginnings of Frankfurt's history as a renowned center of Jewish scholarship are presented in the foundations of the first Jewish ghetto in Europe, in the permanent exhibition 'Mazel and Broche' at Museum Judengasse. Modern Jewish Life in Europe is now orchestrated in different forms at the new museum complex.

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New permanent exhibition “We are now”

Displayed on three floors of the Rothschild-Palais, the new permanent exhibition “We are now” offers different approaches to Jewish history and culture in one of the main centers of Modern Jewish life Europe: Starting in the present, the exhibition tour outlines major historical events and conflicts, reflects on Modern changes of traditions and rituals, and tells individual stories in a mixed media setting, from a Jewish perspective. A special focus lies on renowned fine artists, like f.i. Moritz Daniel Oppenheim, and scholars, like Samson Raphael Hirsch, Martin Buber, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno.

Jews shaped the cultural, economic, scientific and social development of Frankfurt decisively, even after the Holocaust. Based on their own experience of migration they gave distinction to municipal cosmopolitanism as well as to the European meaning of Frankfurt as a city of publishing, scholarship, trade and finances. In order to offer a personal approach to this extraordinary history, a special focus of the exhibition is dedicated to Jewish families, like f.i. Anne Frank’s family whose history is presented exclusively with original objects and documents of family inheritance. The world-famous family Rothschild plays a pivotal role in the new museum: “The historical roots of the Rothschild family are in Frankfurt, and the two current homes of the Jewish Museum are closely linked to the name and the history of the family. Accordingly, it is an honor and a pleasure for us to be involved in the redesign of this prestigious institution, which, moreover, exhibits numerous former family possessions,” states Prof. Klaus Mangold also on behalf of Baron Eric and Baron David de Rothschild, and adds: “We explicitly support the Jewish Museum’s aim to experience Jewish life in the past and present. This is more important than ever at a time when anti-Semitism and resentment towards all that is foreign are threatening to become socially acceptable again.”

A selection of exterior and interior views as well as floor plans of the new Jewish Museum Frankfurt are available for download at: <https://www.juedischesmuseum.de/en/press-room/>

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Press Contact

Sarah Mirjam Fischer

Phone: +49 69 212 34856

sarah.fischer@stadt-frankfurt.de