



DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM

German Historical Museum

History is booming – the German Historical Museum has certainly experienced a surge in interest since its foundation, with numerous temporary exhibitions, an interest which has only increased since its permanent exhibition was opened in 2006. Germany's two thousand year history, as chequered as it is dynamic, is placed in a European context in an exhibition entitled "German History in Pictures and Documents" and presented to the public in Berlin's baroque Zeughaus, or former Arsenal. More than 8,000 exclusive exhibits from the German Historical Museums' collections, whose historical testimonial value is utterly unique, are displayed over 8,000 square metres, presenting a lively, vivid tableau of bygone days. German history is thereby placed in an international context which takes account of both the diverse events demarcating political and historico-cultural exchange, in addition to its integration with neighbouring states' cultural heritage. The permanent exhibition is supplemented by temporary special exhibitions housed in the modern exhibition building, which was designed by the Chinese-American architect I. M. Pei. The spacious new building, with a foyer constructed of glass and steel and a striking helical staircase, was opened in 2003, and can also be accessed via the inner courtyard of the Zeughaus. Significant events and formative facets of German history are displayed across four levels.

The German Historical Museum showcases itself as an open exhibition establishment which seeks to develop a dialogue with its visitors via a variety of topics and displays tailored specifically to heterogeneous age groups and visitor types. This ethos is made manifest in the wide selection of facilities, ranging from multimedia stations in the exhibition areas, designed to intensify the experience of a museum visit, educational tours of the museum, audio tours, academic supporting programmes including symposia and lecture series to workshops for children and teenagers.

Foundation

The German Historical Museum was founded as part of a collaboration by the Federal Republic of Germany and the State of Berlin on the initiative of the former Federal Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, on 28th October 1987 on the occasion of the 750th anniversary of the City of Berlin. In 1988, the Italian architect, Aldo Rossi, won the competition to design a new building for the German Historical Museum, to be located on the bend of the river Spree, near the Reichstag, or German parliament. However, the historical events and peaceful revolution in Germany the following year had the result that these plans never came to fruition. On 3rd October 1990, the day of German Reunification, the Federal Government made the collections and premises of the former GDR "Museum für Deutsche Geschichte" (Museum of German History) available for use by the new museum, this in the wake of the dissolution of the existing museum by the last GDR government in September 1990. These historical events had the effect that the Zeughaus, which dates from 1695 and is thus the oldest building on the famous boulevard "Unter den Linden", became the new site of the German Historical Museum, with employees from both East and West Berlin.



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The German Historical Museum held special exhibitions in the Kronprinzenpalais (former Palace of the Crown Princes) and larger exhibition projects in the Martin-Gropius-Bau exhibition hall as a result of the extensive restoration and reconstruction of the Zeughaus which took place between 1999 and 2003. Several exhibitions were also held at other locations, both national and international, some of these exclusively.

Restorations and new buildings

The façade of the Zeughaus was restored according to historical standards between 1994 and 1998. The building's interior also underwent extensive renovations until 2003. The entire restoration process was carried out by the Winfried Brenne architectural practice. These renovations ensured that the facilities were now in line with 21st century technical museum standards, as 8,000 square metres became available for the permanent exhibition.

The Zeughaus' architectonic gem, the inner courtyard with the cap stones, or masks designed by Andreas Schlüter, once again received a glass canopy during the course of the reconstruction of the exhibition hall by the architect Ioh Ming Pei from 1998 to 2003, as was the case between 1878 and 1945, albeit in another form.

The new temporary exhibition building, which covers 2,700 square metres spread over four floors, creates a bridge between neo-classical and modernist Berlin within view of the Schinkel Buildings, the Altes Museum or Old Museum and the Neue Wache, or New Watchhouse.

Collections

Well over 800,000 artefacts were amassed in the Zeughaus, the Prussian Army Museum, the Museum of German History (GDR) and the German Historical Museum in the course of three hundred years of collection activities. The process of accumulating artefacts began in Berlin's Zeughaus in the early 18th century and continued until the end of the 19th century, by which time it had swelled to become Germany's most significant collection of army-related historical items. In 1952, the GDR founded the Museum of German History in the Zeughaus, using the latter as an exhibition building in the wake of its reconstruction after the ravages of the Second World War. It began an extensive collection relating to the history of the German labour organisation, which included a 20th century poster collection of international significance and complemented the existing militaria collection. The German Historical Museum's collection activities since 1987 have resulted in the addition of a number of high-quality works focussing on German and European history.



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Library

The German Historical Museum also houses a specialist academic library whose focal points include German and general history and museum studies. The library contains over 225,000 volumes, comprising 10,000 rare books, 40,000 periodicals and newspapers, 5,000 works on military history and 10,000 museum catalogues. The public reference library is located in the museum's administration building behind the Zeughaus, which belonged to the Prussian Central Bank of Co-operative Associations between 1899 and 1945 and later to the GDR state-owned enterprise Minol. The bank's former cashier's hall, an architectonic gem with marble pillars, skylights and golden mosaic medallions with representational images from trade and agriculture, serves as the reading room.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 9 am to 4:30 pm

Entrance: Hinter dem Gießhaus

Tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 321

Picture archive

The museum's picture archive owns 500,000 prints relating to German and European history and significant photographer and agency bequests. It also contains documentation pertaining to the collections. Visitors can carry out independent research using the picture archives, and can also view the DHM's print collection electronically via the intranet.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 9 am to 4:30 pm

Research by appointment only

Entrance: Hinter dem Gießhaus

Tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 220, 221, 222

Zeughaus cinema

The Zeughaus cinema, which seats 165 spectators, has been an integral element of the German Historical Museum since the Zeughaus' inauguration as an exhibition building. Its programme is primarily dedicated to thematic retrospectives which highlight the link between historical issues and those relating to the history of film. However, the cinema also shows film series which accompany current exhibitions. The establishment prides itself on offering a range of films which draw on the entire history of the medium. The film series are compiled from a rich pool of documentaries, feature films, silent movies with musical accompaniment and films which are deemed worthy of rediscovery or reassessment.

Entrance: Unter den Linden 2 (Spree (river) side)

Cinematheque: tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 444

Box office: tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 770 (Tues - Thurs from 7 pm, Fri - Sun from 6 pm)

www.dhm.de/kino



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Museum education division and visitor service

The divisions dedicated to museum education and the provision of a visitor service constitute an interface between the museum collections, the exhibitions and the museum's visitors. The exhibitions are tailored to visitors of all ages – adults, children and teenagers, individuals and groups, in a target group-, source- and topic-oriented manner.

Visitors are given the opportunity to become acquainted with the museum as a place of learning, communication and experience via guided tours, history workshops and multimedia productions. The museum education division aims to support the museum in its primary purpose, namely to spark interest in history and historical exhibitions, and thus to make a contribution to political education.

Guided tour reservations

Fax: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 759

fuehrung@dhm.de

Permanent exhibition: tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 751 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 4 pm)

Temporary exhibitions: tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 750 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 4 pm)

Group tour: 75 euros

Maximum 30 participants plus entrance fee

School classes: 1 euro per student

Large groups which are not participating in the DHM's guided tours should be announced in advance

Internet

The German Historical Museum operates one of Germany's most heavily accessed museum internet servers via its website, www.dhm.de, which receives over 30,000 hits every day. Visitors can gain access to in excess of 30,000 HTML pages, 165,000 images and audio and video recordings on the web. The e-mail list "demuseum" functions as an electronic means of communication between 1,800 people from the German museum world. An online database offers access to over 354,000 artefacts from the museum's repositories. This is subject to continual revision and expansion. Webcams show an up-to-the-minute view of the Schlossplatz square in Berlin Mitte and the boulevard Unter den Linden with the Brandenburg Gate.
www.dhm.de



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Friends of the Museum

The German Historical Museum's Friends Association is an organisation designed to raise individual support for the GHM in its attempts to bring history to life. One of the association's primary aims is give young people a better understanding of German history. Just as the highlight of many school trips to Berlin used to be a visit to the Reichstag and parliament buildings, visiting the permanent exhibition on German history at the German Historical Museum now constitutes an important opportunity to develop children's awareness of history, both in an academic and personal context. The exhaustive account of German history and the museum's interesting temporary exhibitions ensure that history is revived for visitors of all ages. The German Historical Museum's Friends Association aims to offer visitors a high-quality range of exhibitions, exhibits and sources, ensuring that the museum is in a position to measure itself against the world's most successful museum establishments.

Bookshop and museum shop

Both the bookshop and the museum shop have a wide selection of items on sale. The natural focus is placed on GHM publications – catalogues, posters, books, postcards, magazines, CDs, CD-ROMs and replicas of historical artefacts – which can all be ordered in writing, by telephone or via the internet.

Tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 827

Fax: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 543

E-mail: verkauf@dhm.de

Zeughaus café

Open daily from 10 am to 6 pm



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Unter den Linden 2
10117 Berlin, Germany
Tel.: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 444
Fax: +49 (0)30 - 20 30 4 - 543
E-mail: info@dhm.de
www.dhm.de

Opening hours

Open daily from 10 am to 6 pm

Entrance fees

6 Euros for both the museum buildings and all the exhibitions.
Free entry for children up to 18 years of age.
The annual season ticket (including one companion) costs 30 Euros.

Handicapped accessible

Architectural tours of the I. M. Pei exhibition building

Group registration
Tel.: +49 (0)30 - 69815040
Fax: +49 (0)30 - 6912689
E-mail: peibau@berlininfo.net

Transport links

Suburban railway stations: Hackescher Markt and Friedrichstraße
Underground railway stations: Französische Straße, Friedrichstraße and Hausvogteiplatz
Bus lines 100 and 200: Staatsoper or Lustgarten

Parking

Underground car park beneath the Bebelplatz square, accessed via Behrenstraße
Dorotheenstraße multi-storey car park
City Quartier Dom Aquarée, access via Spandauer Straße

Current as of 15th October 2009 / subject to alterations