



Jewish Museum Berlin

2013

Presse Information

: The “Eric F. Ross Building”: Dedicated to a Philanthropist

The Jewish Museum Berlin Academy building is named after Eric F. Ross. This US entrepreneur with German-Jewish roots was – during his lifetime and beyond – one of the museum's greatest supporters.

Born in Dortmund in 1919 as Erich Rosenberg, Eric F. Ross (in blessed memory) had a remarkable life. Having fled Germany shortly before the Pogrom Night, he – aged 19 with just 10 dollars in his pocket and no knowledge of the English language – made his way to the USA where he built a new life through hard work and ambition. He soon became a pioneer in the plastics industry with his company Alpha Chemicals & Plastics and Mercer Plastics Company and, along with his wife who died in 2009, one of the USA's most important patrons and philanthropists. Eric F. Ross was one of the major donors to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., and also supported the Ben-Gurion University, the Newark Museum, and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center among others.

Eric F. Ross was also active in his country of origin, for which he was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit, First Class, in 2009. He was closely associated with the Jewish Museum. Much of the museum's educational program is due to his active support and generous donations, in particular the outreach program »on.tour – The JMB Tours Schools. «Since 2007, this program has brought the museum in the form of a mobile exhibition and a workshop to more than 300 schools nationwide.

Eric F. Ross dedicated his gift to the memory of his parents, Albert and Regina Rosenberg, who were murdered in Auschwitz in 1942. In thanks and in honor of his commitment, the exhibition gallery on ground level of the Libeskind building was renamed the “Eric F. Ross Gallery” in 2006.

Page 1 of 2

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In its naming of the academy building, the museum wishes to further honor the entrepreneur Eric F. Ross, who died in Zurich in fall 2010. Eric F. Ross' donation was crucial in the design of this location, which will enable the museum's to intensify its activities in the areas of education and research.