



# Jewish Museum Berlin

2013

## Press Information

### **: The New Jewish Museum Berlin Academy**

#### **A Forum for a Host of new Programs**

Through the opening of the academy at the Jewish Museum Berlin in the new Eric F. Ross Building, the museum broadens its focus to include questions of migration, integration, and intercultural education in a heterogeneous society. The Jewish Museum Berlin will intensify its exploration of the political, social, and cultural conditions for successful immigration and integration policies with the academy program.

“Our aim is exploring how people from different backgrounds can live together peacefully in a country in the 21<sup>st</sup> century”, says Museum Director W. Michael Blumenthal. “This is a question of paramount importance for Germany so that it can bear up against international competition”.

The academy aims to be a forum – bringing together and initiating dialog between the most varied protagonists through its educational program, political initiatives, conferences, colloquia, and seminars. Some projects were launched already in summer and fall 2012.

#### **Interface Between Museum and Society**

The Jewish Museum Berlin with its exhibitions, cultural events, and diverse educational programs is at the interface between museum and society. Its purpose therefore reaches far beyond collecting, researching, and presenting the history of the Jews in Germany: From the historical experience of the discrimination and marginalization of national minorities, responsibility for the political conditions of coexistence and the enforcement of individual rights of all the citizens who live here has grown.

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Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin  
Lindenstraße 9-14 D-10969 Berlin

Telefon | Phone +49 - (0)30 - 25 99 33 00  
Telefax | Fax +49 - (0)30 - 25 99 34 09  
Internet [www.jmberlin.de](http://www.jmberlin.de)



### **Intensification of Academic Research**

The Jewish Museum Berlin offers outstanding academics the opportunity to carry out research projects on Jewish history and culture and questions about the recognition of social diversity in Germany. The first fellow, in place since October 2012, is the social scientist Dr. Karen Körber. She is researching the everyday realities of second and third generation Russian-speaking Jewish immigrants in Germany. Dr. Körber is undertaking the first comprehensive study of the educational and career pathways of the younger generations, the forms their personal lives take, their Jewish identity patterns, and their social affiliations. A series of public lectures and events will accompany this academy project. The results of the study will be presented in a final conference and then published in a publication.

### **The Discussion Series “Visions of Belonging”**

Through the discussion series “Visions of Belonging,” the Jewish Museum Berlin advised by DeutschPlus e.V. creates a forum for productive dialog from which visions and actions can be developed for a heterogeneous German society. The series focuses on various questions and aspects of diversity in our postmodern and postmigrant society. In 2012, the first three events were held entitled: “Does Racism Belong in Germany? And if so, why?“, “Which Religions are Part of Germany?“, and “My Love for Germany...“.

### **“Diversity in Schools”. Networking – Developing – Training**

In cooperation with the German Children and Youth Foundation (GCYF) and funded by the Mercator Foundation, the museum launched the project “Diversity in Schools.” The three-year project will generate innovative and transferable approaches and methods for school education. In close cooperation with three of Berlin’s secondary schools, modules for historico-



political education and teacher training will be developed based on the questions and the practical needs of teachers. The aim is to integrate contemporary topics and approaches in the school day. The teacher training program is combined with a school development process, at the end of which an open, respectful, community-based and thus contemporary school culture will have been established.

### **Jewish Museum Berlin Mentors First School**

Last summer, the Jewish Museum Berlin began a multi-year mentoring program with an integrated secondary school in Berlin-Kreuzberg with a heterogeneous student body. The centerpiece of the program is a history workshop that has students exploring Kreuzberg from a host of perspectives, learning about local history on site. Understanding the importance of history, gaining knowledge about migration and diversity, and Jewish life as well as a firmer anchoring of the Jewish Museum Berlin in Kreuzberg are the objectives of the project.

### **The Diaspora Garden**

In February 2013, the Diaspora Garden in the academy's courtyard will be landscaped and become part of the academy's educational program. Designed by atelier le balto, four seemingly floating steel plateaus of 4 x 14 meters will be constructed. Each one will be planted according to a different theme (landscape, culture and soil, nature and the human race, academy), paying reference to Jewish life and personalities, Jewish festivals and customs. School students will work in small groups planting and cultivating, researching background information, feeling their way to cultural contexts, and experiencing the theme of Diaspora in this vivid way.

### **The Jewish-Islamic Forum**

A dialogic lecture series is planned for the coming years that will serve as a forum for interpreting Jewish and Islamic modernization theories and



philosophies. Leading Islamic scholars, historians, and Muslim and Jewish intellectuals will present the studies and research projects on their respective traditions and enter into discussion.

**Contact:**

**Katharina Schmidt-Narischkin**

Head of Press and Public Relations

Tel.: +49(0)30-25 993 -419

E-mail: [pressestelle@jmberlin.de](mailto:pressestelle@jmberlin.de)

Jewish Museum Berlin

Lindenstr. 9-14, 10969 Berlin

[www.jmberlin.de](http://www.jmberlin.de)

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