

Background Information, Leipzig, 05/2020

## **BETWEEN TRADITION AND THE MODERN ERA – THE CITY’S MEMORY**

### **Exhibition venues and historical sites of the Museum of City History Leipzig**

**Ever since its inception in 1909, the Leipzig Museum of City History has been the city’s historic memory. Its decentralised structure across eight sites makes it the place at which relevant historic subjects and formative aspects of life in the city are collected, researched and brought to life for education in the modern age. The interaction between authentic historic sites, multi-faceted collections and education and networking activities based on participation provides a very varied impression of the cultural history and development of a growing Saxon metropolis with a decidedly cosmopolitan approach.**

The **Old Town Hall** is the flagship in our museum structure. This renaissance masterpiece by Hieronymus Lotter (around 1497 to 1580) dating back to 1558 was the seat of the Leipzig municipal administration and of important courts over many centuries. On two floors, as well as in the attic and the dungeon, the permanent exhibition presents roughly 2,000 exhibits in “Original Leipzig. From the Middle Ages to the Battle of the Nations” and “Modern Times. From Industrialisation to the Present” outlining the city’s varied history from its beginnings to the present. The most important treasures of the exhibition include Haussmann’s portrait of Bach (1746) and Katharina of Bora’s wedding ring from 1525. In addition to this, a dress made from inflation money in the 1920s or the installation “Uniformed East German police officers against Monday demonstrators” provide unusual insights into Leipzig’s history. The historic banqueting hall in the Old Town Hall, as well as the Old Stock Exchange (1678) nearby provide a very special aura for concerts, readings, weddings and official events of the city.

As the seat of the management, administration, central documentation and educational facility, **Haus Böttchergäßchen** has been the heart of the Museum of City History since 2004. Several special exhibitions on important topics of cultural history are presented here every year. In the mezzanine, the **interactive exhibition “Children hold a trade fair”** invites both children and adults to go on a tour of discovery and try out various activities. Moreover, both the library and the photographic library of the collections are regularly accessible for the public.

**The Monument to the Battle of the Nations**, which evolved from a war memorial to a European peace monument, is a symbol of the city and a tourist attraction of the first order. At 91 metres, this monument built from concrete and granite porphyry and inaugurated in 1913 towers over the city. Its viewing platform provides a unique panoramic view of Leipzig. The monument as such, concert events in the impressive dome and tours of the **FORUM 1813** museum bring hundreds of thousands of visitors to the city every year.

Since 1711, the “**Zum Arabischen Coffe Baum**” (**Arab Coffee Tree**) museum – the oldest coffee house in Germany – has been a meeting point of the famous. Here, Saxony’s most favourite beverage – coffee – is served with cake to the tune of the Coffee Cantata. 15 museum rooms are arranged on the upper floors around the lovely inner courtyard. The historic structure of these rooms provides an authentic atmosphere for the exhibition on Saxon coffee culture. Since 2019, extensive reconstruction work has been underway in the building, which is scheduled to be reopened in early 2022.

The **Schillerhaus**, which is idyllically located in the Gohlis district and connected with the “Ode to Joy” and its exhibition provide insights into the conviviality and literary scene during the period of Enlightenment. Friedrich Schiller (1759 to 1805) lived here from May to September 1785 and wrote the “Ode to Joy” and “Don Carlos” here. With a varied programme of events all year round, the picturesque garden invites neighbours, families and guests of the city to relax and spend some time.

Since 1977, the collection of the **Sports Museum**, with its more than 85,000 exhibits, has documented a city constantly on the move – from Olympic medallists to mass sports. At present, the Sports Museum presents special exhibitions and a sports route in the cityscape. However, over the coming years, the museum is to be given a new exhibition area near the Sportforum and the arena.

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