

HÖCHST TELLS ITS STORY! ABOUT THE MUSEUM IN BOLONGARO PALACE

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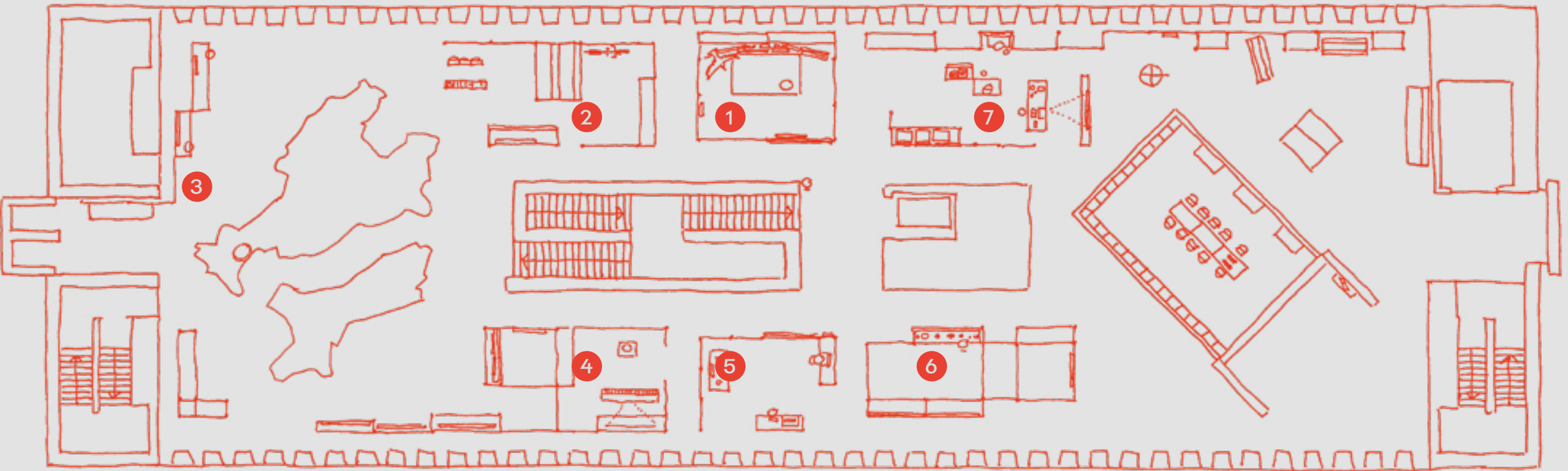
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Exhibition Documentation

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INTRO- DUCTION

A MUSEUM FOR, ABOUT AND WITH FRANKFURT'S WEST

DOREEN MÖLDERS

FRANKFURT-HÖCHST – HISTORY AND PRESENT

Höchst is a district in the west of Frankfurt.

Many different people live here together.

Höchst has industry with large factories, but also a rich everyday culture.

The district is constantly changing.

Höchst has a long and interesting history.

In the past, Höchst was an independent town with its own rights.

This was from the 14th century until 1928.

Then Höchst became part of Frankfurt.

THE BOLONGARO PALACE IN HÖCHST

A large palace stands on the Main river: the Bolongaro Palace.

The Bolongaro family had this palace built in the 1770s.

The family came from northern Italy and traded in tobacco.

Through the tobacco trade, the family became very wealthy.

From 1909 to 1928, the palace served as town hall of Höchst.

Afterwards, it was used as a local government office.

NEW USE OF THE PALACE

The palace has been renovated and restored in recent years.

In 2027, the palace will open to the public.

The historic palace will then serve a new purpose:

It will be open to everyone and become a cultural palace.

The palace will house:

- a daycare centre
- a youth and cultural centre
- a music school
- a museum

THE MUSEUM IN BOLONGARO PALACE

The museum will cover three subject areas:

1. The history and present of Höchst
2. The Bolongaro family and their palace
3. Höchst Porcelain – the largest exhibition of its kind in the world

The museum will open in 2027.

Frankfurt's West will gain a special place:

The museum reflects the diversity of the district and explores its history.

It asks questions and it listens.

In doing so, it grows together with the city's society.

COLLABORATION WITH MANY PEOPLE

The museum is being created through the collaboration of many people.

Associations, artists, private individuals and

volunteers from Höchst have all contributed.

They have exchanged ideas and developed topics together.

This work has taken place over many years.

The CityLab of the Historical Museum Frankfurt has created an exhibition about this process.

It is entitled: "Höchst Tells Its Story! About the Museum in Bolongaro Palace".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to warmly thank the CityLab team, led by Susanne Gesser.

Many thanks to the following for organizing the exhibition:

Konstantin Lannert

Paula Loem

Ines Müller

Anne-France Schiegler

Patricia Stahl

I would especially like to thank the CityLab participants.

They shared their experiences and stories with us and the public.

I would like to thank our close partners:

- the Höchst Society for History and Antiquities
- the Cultural and Museum Society Bolongaro

I would also like to thank:

- the exhibition designers from arge gillmann + schneegg (Basel)
- the graphic designers from Profi Aesthetics (Berlin/Frankfurt)

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Exhibitions like this cannot be realised without funding.

For their support, I would like to thank:

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- the Inclusion Office of the City of Frankfurt
- the Frankfurt Active Neighbourhood Programme
- the World Design Capital (WDC)
- the Commerzbank Foundation



THE RENOVATION OF THE BOLONGARO PALACE – A LONG ROAD

The Bolongaro Palace is a historic and remarkable building.

It is a listed architectural monument.

Renovating a historic building is not straightforward.

It requires a great deal of money and patience.

Construction projects often encounter challenges such as:

- Delays: everything happens later than planned
- Cost overruns: everything becomes more expensive than planned
- Replanning: the plans need to be revised

There is also an important question to consider:

How should the building be used?

This decision deserves careful thought.

It is valuable to involve the local community and ask:

How do we want to use this building today?

THE PLANNING HISTORY

Exactly 20 years ago, the first planning phase began.

At that time, the Historical Museum Frankfurt worked on:

- a concept for a new museum in the Bolongaro Palace
- a cost plan for the museum

Then problems arose with the city budget.

The city had less money available.

As a result, the museum idea was abandoned.

A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR THE MUSEUM IDEA

In 2010, the museum idea was revived.

People from Höchst championed the cause and founded a new society: the “Cultural and Museum Society Bolongaro”.

A planning workshop was held to gather ideas for the new museum.

The Historical Museum Frankfurt supported the process.

The renovation of the building began in 2017.

In 2018, the Historical Museum Frankfurt was commissioned to plan the museum in Bolongaro Palace.

THE MUSEUM CONCEPT

The museum was developed in close collaboration with:

- the Cultural and Museum Society Bolongaro
- the Höchst Society for History and Antiquities

The museum in Bolongaro Palace will feature:

- A Porcelain Museum: The Höchst Porcelain Manufactory has produced many porcelain objects. Visitors will be able to see them here.
- A Höchst Museum: The Höchst Museum tells the story of Höchst’s past.
- A CityLab: Children, young people and adults share their experiences and stories. Their contributions reflect their perspectives on Höchst’s past and present.

THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE OPENING

The opening of the palace and museum was originally planned for 2024.

It is now scheduled for 2027.

THE CITYLAB EXHIBITION AS A PREVIEW

A full year before the museum opens in the Bolongaro Palace, we are offering a glimpse of what is to come:

The CityLab exhibition “Höchst Tells Its Story!” at the Historical Museum Frankfurt previews what the new museum in Höchst will bring.

But it does not yet reveal everything.

PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

“Höchst Tells Its Story!” shows how the new museum is taking shape.

But it goes further than that:

Visitors are invited to get involved and share their views.

The focus is on questions of museum planning:

- How can people participate in the planning and shaping of the museum?
- How do we design the exhibition?
- What role does a museum play today for the people of the city?

We invite you to:

- Get involved.
- Join the conversation.
- Think along with us.







THE EXHIBITION “HÖCHST TELLS ITS STORY!” IN THE CITYLAB

THE CITYLAB EXHIBITION IS ENTITLED:

“Höchst Tells Its Story! About the Museum in Bolongaro Palace”

The exhibition shows how a museum is planned today.

It also asks what role a museum plays for the city,
and what role it plays for the people and their stories.

TWO THEMES OF THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition explores two major themes:

FIRST THEME: CONTENTS OF THE FUTURE MUSEUM

The exhibition presents key aspects of the future museum.

It covers historical developments and contemporary experiences.

It focuses on what makes Höchst special, but also addresses
broader social topics.

SECOND THEME: THE PATH TO THE MUSEUM

The exhibition makes visible how the museum is being created.

Throughout the development process, questions were continually asked:

- Who tells stories?
- Who collects objects?
- How do the various people involved work together?

7 AREAS OF MUSEUM-MAKING

These questions gave rise to 7 areas:

1. Storytelling – The museum in Bolongaro Palace tells a variety of stories
2. Opening – The new museum aims to be accessible to many people
3. Sharing – People share knowledge and experiences in the museum
4. Transforming – The museum transforms the spaces of the Bolongaro Palace
5. Presenting – The museum's topics are displayed in a particular way
6. Collaborating – The museum works together with many contributors
7. Collecting – Different people collect things, memories and ideas

These seven areas show: museums are more than places for
storing objects.

The work of a museum is diverse and dynamic.

It is always an ongoing process.

WHAT IS THERE TO SEE?

The exhibition features a variety of objects:

- Pieces from the Höchst porcelain collection
- Objects from the Höchst Society for History and Antiquities
- Various works of art
- Everyday items collected during the CityLab „Open Bolongaro“ project

In addition, media stations are being tested.

Some are screen-based, i.e. digital.

The media stations were developed for use in Bolongaro Palace.

For example:

- a digital model of the St. Justin's Church
- a digital porcelain workshop
- a customs game

After testing, they can be further refined before the 2027 opening.

THE ACCOMPANYING PUBLICATION

This publication accompanies the exhibition „Höchst Tells Its Story!“

It is written in plain language.

It contains the texts for all 7 areas and

includes images of the individual contributions.

ACCESSIBILITY

The tactile floor guidance system guides visitors through the exhibition and makes various contributions accessible:

- through models that can be touched
- through audio texts

ACCOMPANYING EVENTS

Alongside the exhibition, a range of events will take place at the Historical Museum and in Höchst:

- Walking and cycling tours of the city
- Boat trips on the Main river
- Guided tours at the construction site of the new museum
- Creative and painting activities for children
- Film evenings on the theme of museum-making
- Storytelling sessions about personal collected items
- Group visits to art and ceramics exhibitions

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

A symposium with international guests will also take place.

A symposium is a gathering where people talk, work and exchange ideas with one another.

The symposium will take place at the Historical Museum Frankfurt and in Höchst.

The theme is:

“How to do a Cultural Palace? Reflections, Practice, and Vision”

Together we will discuss questions such as:

- How should the Bolongaro Palace be used as a cultural palace?
- What activities and offerings should be available there?
- How can the palace become an open place for everyone?

The accompanying events and the symposium give you the opportunity to ask questions and contribute your own perspectives.

OUR INVITATION

We warmly invite you to:

Explore the exhibition at your own pace.

Join the conversation.

Become part of this process!

Your Team at the Museum in Bolongaro Palace





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STORYTELLING >>...<<

WHO DECIDES WHAT IS TOLD?

A museum can never show everything.

Choices have to be made.

But who makes those choices?

Who decides which topics matter and which objects are displayed?

The museum in Bolongaro Palace tells the story of Höchst.

But which stories from Höchst should visitors encounter?

DIFFERENT WAYS OF STORYTELLING

The new museum explores different ways of telling the history of Höchst:

There is a digital flight through the centuries.

It presents events in the district's history that have long been considered significant.

But some people see Höchst through different eyes.

Artists, for example.

In their accounts, different dates appear.

Different moments matter to them.

Their stories are more personal and offer their own perspective on the city.

An urban researcher presents yet another viewpoint in the exhibition.

She highlights what is often overlooked:

Many people, or their families, have not always lived in Höchst.

They previously lived in other countries.

Yet they have shaped Höchst:

its economy, its community life, its development.

She also shows where they are excluded:

in the politics and everyday life of the city.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MUSEUM

A museum holds power and bears responsibility.

When it tells stories, it must decide:

Which people do we commemorate?

Which events do we present?

How do we present those events?

That is why the museum asks the people of Höchst:

What matters to you?

And it also looks back:

What was it like to live here in the past?

Through these many different narratives, a varied picture of Höchst emerges.

Yet gaps remain.

Some stories are still missing.

That is why the museum team continues to work with people in the district.

Together, they aim to include more stories over time.

FLIGHT OVER HÖCHST



At the top of the roof of Bolongaro Palace stands a golden pelican.
In one of the exhibition films, the pelican takes visitors on a tour
of the city from above.
In 11 chapters, he tells stories from Höchst's past.
The stories were selected by the museum team.
And there are many more to be told.

ETERNAL HÖCHST



The artwork by Barbara Greul Aschanta is a timeline of Höchst.
Barbara Greul Aschanta selected dates she considers
significant for Höchst.
The artwork shows that history is alive and constantly changing.
History can always be told anew.



Tülây Güneş researches cities and leads urban tours in Höchst.
She focuses in particular on the relationship between migration and the city.
Migration means: people move from one place to another.
On her tours, Tülây Güneş raises important questions:
Who belongs to the city? Who is forgotten?
She wants all people to be visible in the city's history.
The first stop on her tours is Höchst railway station.

COLLECTING [✳]

People have always collected:
objects, stories, memories.
Almost anything can be collected.
Collections show what matters to us.
We do not need collections to survive.
And yet we preserve some things and not others.
Why?

THE PORCELAIN COLLECTION

Over decades, many Höchst porcelain objects came
together to form a large collection.
This eventually gave rise to a porcelain museum in Höchst.
Specialists at the museum care for the collection and continue to expand it.

HÖCHST SOCIETY FOR HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES

The Höchst Society for History and Antiquities preserves objects
connected to the district.
These objects tell stories of Höchst.
Without this collection, there would be no exhibition about the district.
The society does vital work.

THE HOECHST AG ARCHIVE

The company Hoechst AG manufactured dyes and medicines.
It shaped life throughout the Rhine-Main region.
It employed a great many people.
One of them collected objects related to the company.
Without this collection, that history would be lost.

COME TO STAY

Four friends have collected their stories.

They have followed different paths in life.

They come from different generations.

They and their families came to Höchst from other countries.

Höchst has become part of their life stories.

The project is called “Come to Stay”.

WHY ARE COLLECTIONS IMPORTANT?

Collections are the foundation of a museum — including the museum in Bolongaro Palace.

Collections can be:

- researched,
- questioned in new ways,
- and displayed in new ways over time.

That is how they stay alive.

HÖCHST SOCIETY FOR HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES



The helmet comes from the collection of the Höchst Society for History and Antiquities. It once belonged to a worker at Hoechst AG. Hoechst AG was a large chemical company in Höchst. Many workers wore the blue helmets on the job.

HISTORY OF THE HÖCHST PORCELAIN COLLECTION



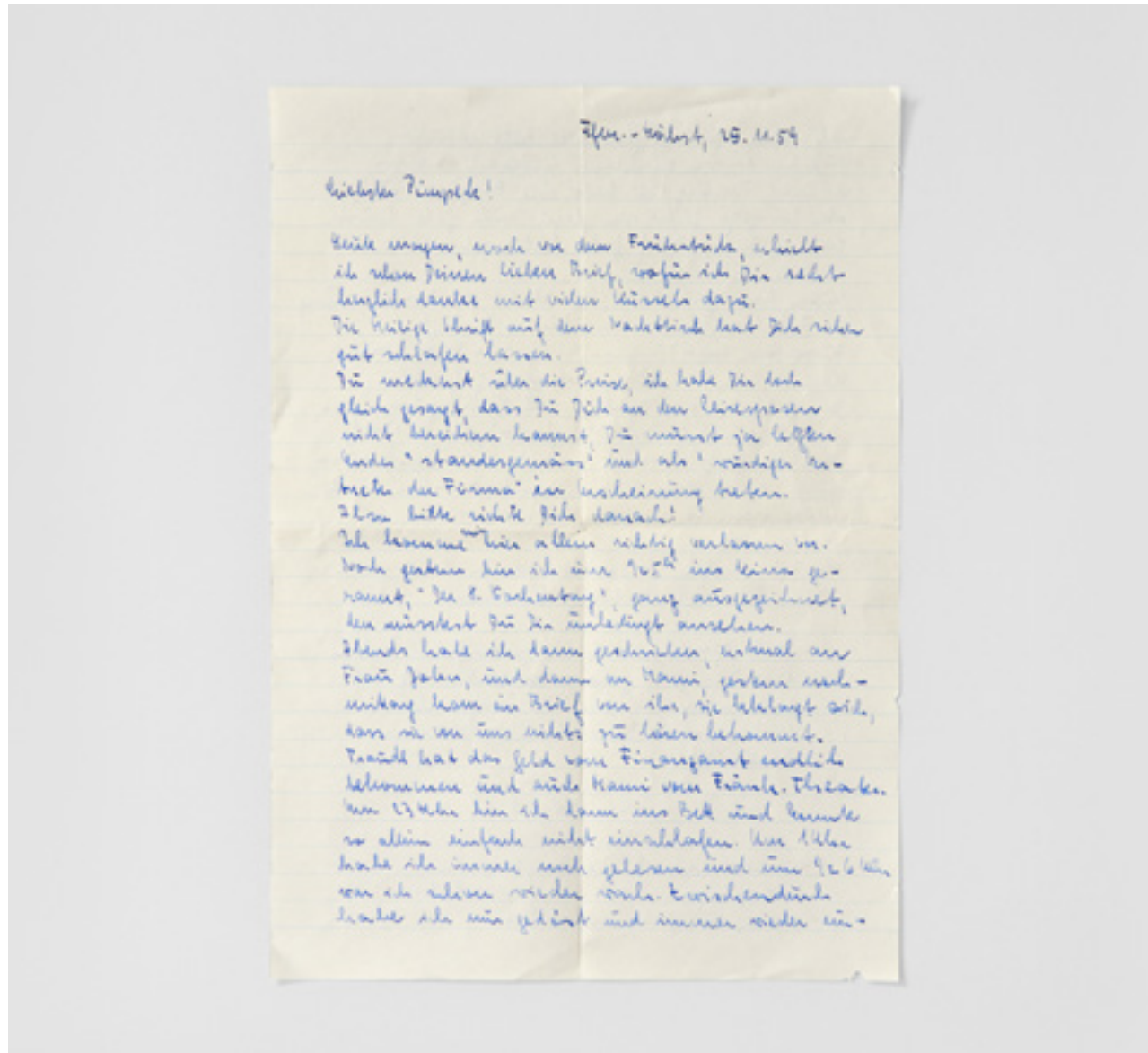
The figure group “The Tall Coiffure” is part of the Höchst Porcelain Collection.
The group was created in the 18th century.
Three men are styling a woman’s hair into an extraordinarily tall arrangement.
The piece pokes fun at a fashion trend at the French court in the 1770s:
at the time, many people wore elaborate hairstyles and wigs.

MEMORIES OF HOECHST AG



Udo Koch has been collecting items relating to the history of
Hoechst AG for over 20 years.
His collection includes plans, photographs, the company newspaper,
tools, and much more.
The football shirt also comes from his collection.
It bears the Hoechst AG logo.

COME TO STAY



Sabine Fischer's parents came to Germany in the 1950s.

At first, they lived in different places and were not always able to be together.

So they wrote letters to one another.

The letters capture events, thoughts and feelings.

Eventually the family moved to Höchst together.

There, Sabine Fischer made friends who shared similar experiences:

Sylwia Höhne, Tülay Salur und Consuelo Terraza.

Their stories are also featured in the exhibition.

OPENING



Museums display objects and tell stories.

But not everyone can make full use of museums.

All of the following are barriers:

Texts are often very difficult to read and understand.

Displayed objects may only be looked at, not touched.

Climbing stairs is difficult or impossible for some people.

The new museum in Höchst wants to be there for many different people.

That is why there are many things to touch.

There are texts in plain language.

And the building has few barriers.

Particularly important: people with different needs were involved in the process.

The exhibition includes various models that visitors can touch:

There is a model of the Saint Justin's Church.

That is a church in Höchst.

And a model of the Höchst Synagogue.

The synagogue was destroyed in 1938.

The models help visitors to understand the buildings better.

There is also a model of the Bolongaro Palace itself, the building that houses the museum.

A customs game lets visitors learn about the Main river and the old customs posts in a playful way.

It is fun and helps bring history to life.

This booklet is written in plain language.

It also helps ensure that many people can fully enjoy the exhibition.

SAINT JUSTIN'S CHURCH



The Saint Justin's Church in Höchst is the oldest church in Frankfurt.
It was built almost 1,200 years ago.
It is still in use as a church today.

Inside, many original features from the time of its
construction are still visible.
At a media station, visitors can explore the church in detail.

THE HÖCHST SYNAGOGUE



There used to be a larger Jewish community in Höchst.
In 1905 they built a synagogue on the market square.
In 1938 the synagogue was destroyed by the Nazis.
It was demolished in 1939.

In the exhibition, the synagogue can be explored as a digital model.
There is also a tactile model for people who are blind or partially sighted.



The Main was an important trade route.
Ships brought goods to Höchst.
Merchants were required to pay customs duties for this.

At an interactive station, visitors can try out for
themselves how customs worked.

PRESENTING

A museum can tell the story of a city in many different ways:
clear, engaging, and encouraging to visitors to explore it with pleasure.

The museum in Bolongaro Palace has much to discover:

- objects and images,
- films and games,
- models to touch,
- sounds and texts.

The visit is meant to be interesting.
And enjoyable.

Some topics are complex.

That is why the museum offers special ways to engage with them.

For example:

- **An animated film about porcelain production**

The history of the Höchst Porcelain Manufactory is not straightforward.

A porcelain manufactory is a place where porcelain is made.

A film makes the history exciting and easy to understand.

- **Models to touch**

There are models of buildings that visitors are allowed to touch.

This helps them understand the buildings better.

The models represent the Bolongaro Palace, the Höchst Synagogue and the Saint Justin's Church.

- **Films to choose from**

Short films show what the palace was used for in the past.

Visitors can choose for themselves: what do I want to see?

What interests me?

- **Images instead of many words**

Who was the Bolongaro family?

Why did they build such a large palace?

An illustrated information panel explains it simply.

The people working on the exhibition ask themselves:

What do people want to know today?

How much money do we have for the exhibition?

How much space is available?

These questions also shape what the exhibition looks like.

THE BOLONGARO FAMILY



The portrait shows Anna Maria Bolongaro. She was the last member of the Bolongaro family living in the palast and died in 1783.

The Bolongaro family came from northern Italy. The family traded in tobacco and became very wealthy. Later, disputes arose with the city of Frankfurt. That is why the family moved to Höchst.

THE HISTORY OF PORCELAIN – AN ANIMATED FILM



Porcelain was invented in China.
In the 18th century, everyone in Europe wanted porcelain too.
But it took some time before the right mixture was discovered.
In 1746, a porcelain manufactory was founded in Höchst.

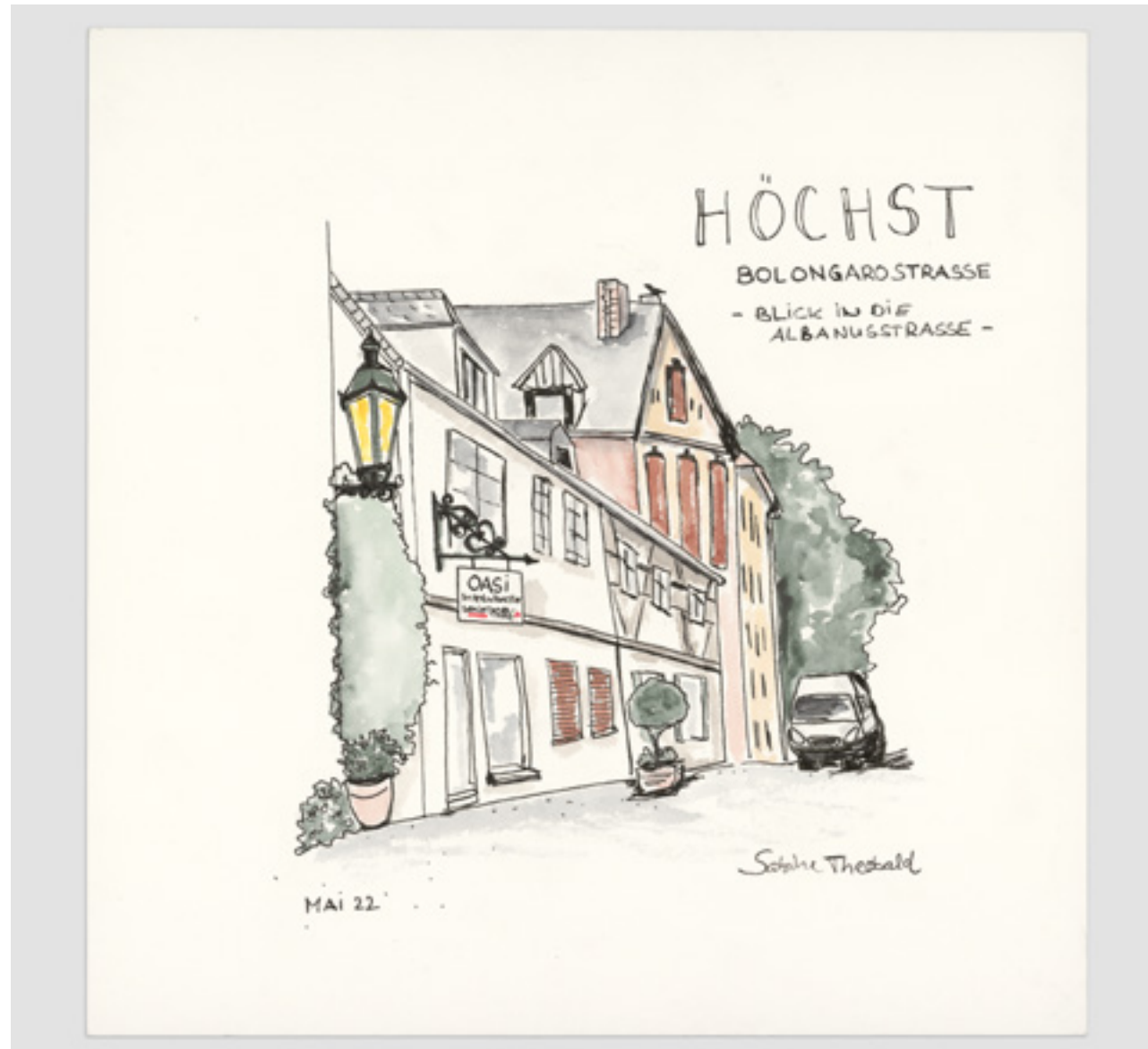
The film tells this story in five parts.
It features key characters and works of Höchst porcelain.

SHORT STORIES FROM BOLONGARO PALACE



The Bolongaro family built a very large palace in Höchst.
It has over 200 rooms and is 119 metres long.

Over time, the palace has served many different purposes:
as a prison, a town hall, and a shopping centre, among others.
From 2027, the palace will become a cultural centre with a museum.



The picture shows a section of the Bolongaro Street.
The exhibition features many pictures of the street by various artists.
Together, the pictures form a colourful portrait of the street.
The artists are part of a group called Urban Sketchers Rhein-Main.
Urban sketching means drawing the city.
To do this, artists go outside and draw on location.
They use paints, coloured pencils and ink.

SHARING .|.|.

Every person has their own experiences:
events, feelings, special moments.
Experiences can connect people with one another.
We realise that others have been through something similar.
This helps us understand each other better,
or learn something new about others.

WHAT KINDS OF EXPERIENCES ARE THERE IN THE MUSEUM?

In the museum, artists talk about their work.
This helps visitors understand their art better and discover what
Höchst means to them.
Other stories come from groups or individuals.
Sometimes young and older people share their stories together.
In this way, visitors discover new perspectives on life.
They find things they have in common with others.

Some people also speak about discrimination.
About having been treated unfairly.
From these shared experiences, an audio contribution has been
created for the exhibition.
People with a wide range of experiences took part, and more can
still join in today.

WHAT DOES SHARING EXPERIENCES ACHIEVE?

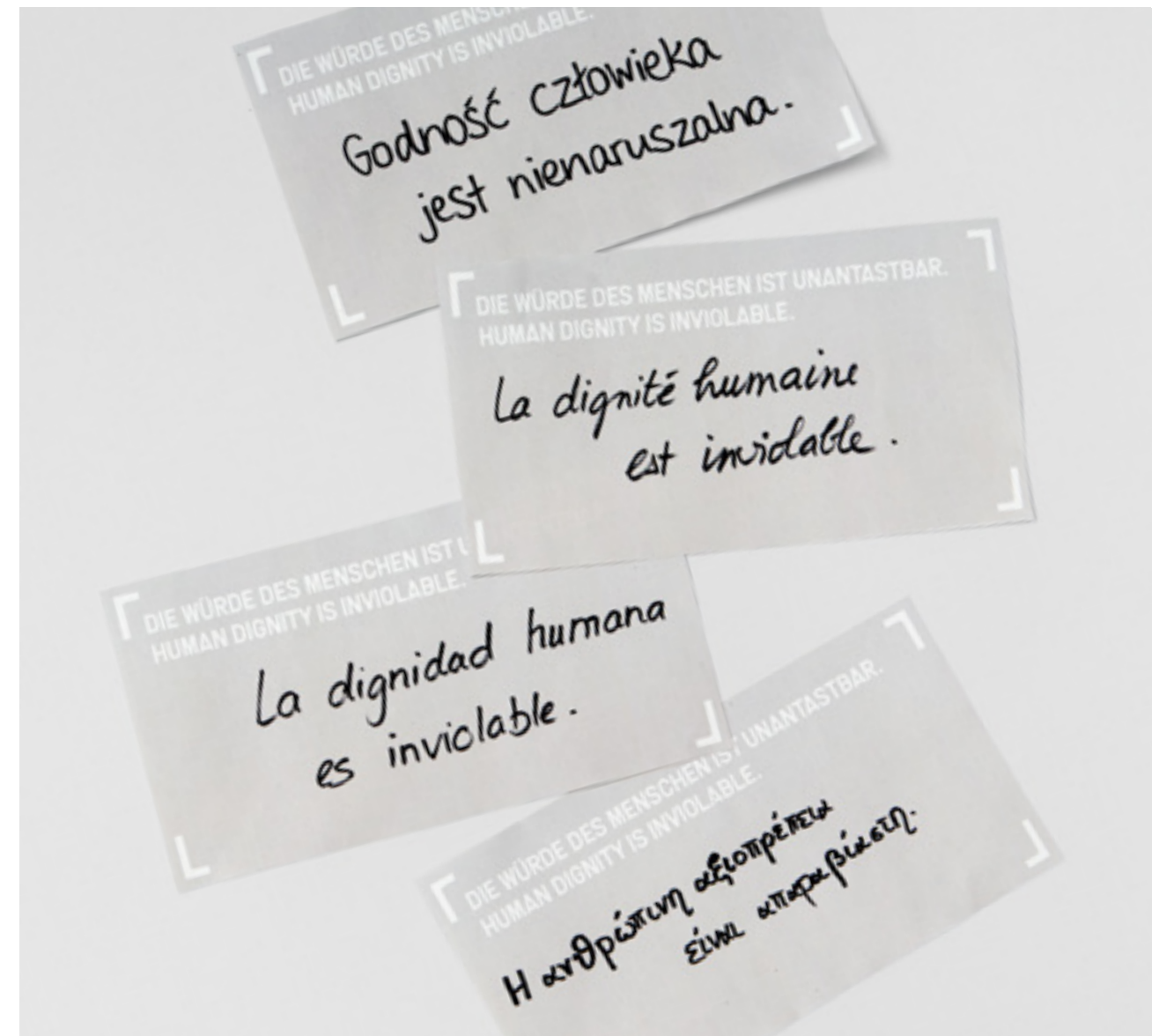
Shared experiences bring people together.
They help us understand different points of view.
The museum invites people to talk with one another and exchange ideas.

SETTLING IN



The Eritrean Cultural Society was founded in 2007. It is a society dedicated to the culture of the country of Eritrea. The society nurtures Eritrean culture and is active in Höchst. Once a week, children have classes in the Eritrean community. There, they learn, for example, the Eritrean alphabet “Geez.”

HUMAN DIGNITY



Amir Mansoor from PakBann e.V. has created an audio station together with the museum. The theme is human dignity. Human dignity means that every person has equal worth.

Amir Mansoor collected voices from people in Frankfurt. They speak the following sentence in different languages: “Human dignity is inviolable.” This means: no person may be humiliated or harmed.



A Madonna sculpture once stood in the Bolongaro Palace:
a statue of Mary with Jesus.

A statue is a large figure, which can be made of stone,
wood, or other materials.

The artist Peter Hartwich is from Höchst.

He saw the statue from the palace and created his own Madonna statue:
his statue is made of marble.

Visitors are welcome to touch it.

At an audio station, Peter Hartwich tells his story.



WHO MAKES THE MUSEUM?

The museum is built through collaboration.

The team at Historical Museum Frankfurt works closely with
people from Höchst.

Collaboration can take many different forms.

Sometimes everyone develops an idea together.

Sometimes contributions come entirely from the museum's partners.

Some content comes directly from museum staff:

they are permanently employed, freelance, or work on a voluntary basis,
meaning without pay.

All of them are experts who research the history of Höchst together.

For example, the history of porcelain production.

Other content is developed with associations from Höchst or with
individual people.

They have long been engaged with the history of the district and want to
share their knowledge.

Other projects come from artists who are active in the district and offer
their current, personal perspective.

WHAT MATTERS IN COLLABORATION?

Collaboration helps to make the palace an open place where many
different people can play an active role.

But collaboration is not always straightforward.

It must be clear who is allowed to decide what.

The museum needs to show people:

we want to work with you.

Building trust takes time.

A WISH CLOTH FOR HÖCHST



The artist Gisela Hafer created a large wish cloth for Höchst. She asked residents of Höchst: what do you wish for Höchst? Everyone wrote and painted their wishes on strips of fabric. Gisela Hafer then sewed the colourful fabric strips together.

THE BOLONGARO TAPESTRY



Many people from Höchst sewed a large wall tapestry together: children, young people and adults. They stitched places and memories from Höchst into the tapestry. It depicts the Main river, the old town, churches and many scenes from everyday life. The project ran from 2016 to 2020.



This object is both a candelabra and a sculpture.
It depicts a couple in love surrounded by animals.
This is meant to convey that life in the countryside is
beautiful and harmonious.
The shapes are also reminiscent of nature.
They are branches and shells.
This is typical of the Rococo style,
an artistic movement that emerged 300 years ago.
Back then many things looked very different from today.

TRANSFORMING

Part of the Bolongaro Palace is being converted into a museum.
This is a major transformation.

New spaces are being created:

- real rooms you can walk into,
- virtual spaces on a computer,
- and imaginary spaces that exist only in people's minds.

A photographer has documented the renovation.
His images show how the old palace is becoming a museum, step by step.

In the new spaces, visitors can learn how porcelain is made.
But the museum has no fire or water for making real porcelain.
That is why there is a computer station where visitors can
virtually make porcelain

Some things also leave the museum and venture out into the district.
A children's advertising column stands outside in the city.
It connects the museum with Höchst.
There, children and others can display new contributions time and again.

WHAT DOES THE MUSEUM MEAN FOR HÖCHST?

A new museum is moving into the Bolongaro Palace.

This raises many questions.

The palace was once a grand residence for wealthy people.

But what is it today?

A place for memories?

A place for dreams?

A place that people can shape themselves?

Even after it opens, the museum is meant to remain a place that can change.

It should always stay open to the ideas and wishes of people in

Frankfurt's West.

CHILDREN'S ADVERTISING COLUMN



Children and young people from Höchst designed a large advertising column for the museum.

They asked themselves:

What do we like about Höchst?

What do we not like?

Where are our favourite places?

Their answers are displayed on the column.

MAKING PORCELAIN



There is a porcelain manufactory in Höchst where porcelain is produced.
It is a complex process.

At three interactive stations in the exhibition,
visitors can try it out for themselves:
mixing the porcelain paste, shaping it, and painting it.
This way, visitors can virtually create their own porcelain piece.

NEW BEGINNINGS



Since 2022, Benedikt Seemann has been photographing the
Bolongaro Palace and documenting its renovation.
His photographs show the palace as a place of change.
And how something new emerges from something old.

A CITYLAB EXHIBITION IS A COLLABORATIVE WORK

WHAT IS THE CITYLAB?

The Historical Museum wants to show Frankfurt from many perspectives and to be there for as many residents as possible.

That is what the CityLab is for.

It is part of the Historical Museum Frankfurt and it is a place for trying things out, getting involved and experimenting.

All Frankfurt residents are invited to help shape the Historical Museum – because they know the city best.

CityLab exhibitions are created together:

about Frankfurt, about life in the city, and about people's experiences in the city.

Everyone is invited to show their city through these exhibitions.

The museum asks: what matters to you in Frankfurt?

Participants bring their stories and share their views.

THE STORY OF THE CITYLAB

In 2009, the museum began thinking about how exhibitions could be made together with the people of the city.

In 2011, the first CityLab exhibition opened outside the museum in an empty office.

The museum was out and about in the city.

Until 2015, a new exhibition was shown each year at different locations across Frankfurt.

In October 2017, the Historical Museum reopened with a new building.

The old museum no longer existed.

The new museum now has a dedicated space for the CityLab and its exhibitions.

Since then, a new CityLab exhibition has been on show at the Historical Museum Frankfurt every year.

HOW A CITYLAB EXHIBITION COMES TOGETHER

A CityLab exhibition is always a collaborative work.

All Frankfurt residents are invited to take part and share their experiences and personal stories.

Everyone can contribute and have their say.

Every voice carries equal weight.

Everyone can help shape the outcome.

It takes around a year to create an exhibition together.

The people taking part meet several times a year and work on the exhibition together.

Some tasks are done as a group; others are done individually.

These are the different stages of the process:

Discussions about the content of the exhibition

- Together, participants discuss what should be shown in the exhibition.
- They talk through the themes and individual stations.
Everyone can present their idea.
- The following questions guide the discussions:
What story are you telling?
Which objects should be on display?
How should they be arranged or hung in the space?
- Museum experts advise all participants on their stories and ideas for the exhibition.

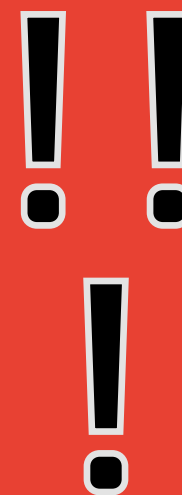
Meetings with the exhibition designers

- They are the experts in making sure all contributions look their best.
- They discuss with all participants how the exhibition should look.
- The designers listen to the stories people want to tell, and use these to develop a proposal for the exhibition.

Writing texts

- Each participant writes a short text about their story so that others can understand it well.
- The texts describe the individual stations in the exhibition.

The opening is a major and special occasion for everyone.
It is celebrated together, and everyone views the exhibition as a group.
Each person takes pride in their own contribution and in having taken part
in a CityLab exhibition at the Historical Museum Frankfurt.
In this way, visitors to the museum can learn about the many stories of
the city.
This makes the museum more diverse and vibrant.
Your story and perspective can be part of the museum too.



THE NEW MUSEUM



THE BOLONGARO PALACE: FROM SNUFF TOBACCO TO CULTURE

The history of Höchst begins where the Nidda river flows into the Main.

Two thousand years ago, Roman soldiers built a fort at this spot.

A fort is a military camp.

Later, a military brickworks was also established there.

This place has always been a site of much construction.

Höchst was also a good place for trade:

From the 14th century onwards, every ship on the Main had to stop here and pay customs duties on its goods.

Merchants therefore had to pay in order to transport their goods further.

This was a particular problem for the city of Frankfurt, which lies only eleven kilometres upstream.

In the 18th century, plans were made to build a new town at Höchst.

At the time, Höchst belonged to the Electorate of Mainz.

An Electorate was a German territory that had the right to elect the emperor.

Streets and squares for the new town were carefully planned.

Everything followed a clear order.

However, the Elector of Mainz, Johann Friedrich Karl von Ostein, needed money for these plans.

At this time, two brothers arrived in Frankfurt: the Bolongaro.

They came from Italy and had businesses in Frankfurt and Amsterdam.

In a short time they became wealthy merchants.

They traded in goods and lent money, much like a bank.

But disputes arose between the brothers and the people of Frankfurt.

So they moved to Höchst, where they became the Elector's partners in the project to build a new town near to Höchst.

The Bolongaro brothers were not only skilled businessmen.

They also had a keen eye for special locations.

In the new town, they chose a plot of land along the river.

Anyone travelling along the Main would see their house: the Bolongaro Palace.

The palace was meant to show that important people lived there.

Their palace became a magnificent building:

it stands broad and solid on the banks of the Main.

The building was designed to last and to impress.

Construction took eight years: it began in 1772.

After three years, the central section was complete.

After a further five years, the side wings were also finished.

The façade of the palace is beautifully decorated and clearly structured.

In the centre, a section projects slightly forward.

That gives particular emphasis to the middle.

The windows are tall and regularly arranged.

This lends the building a clear and orderly appearance.

From the outside, the Bolongaro Palace today looks much as it did back then.

Inside, however, much has changed:

rooms have been converted and put to different uses.

The museum in Bolongaro Palace tells the story of these changes.

It tells of electors and merchants.

Of Roman bricks and grand ambitions.

Of buildings and bold plans.

It tells stories that reach all the way to the present day.

A PALACE FOR EVERYONE: THE NEW MUSEUM IN FRANKFURT'S WEST

For a long time, the Bolongaro Palace was closed due to construction work. Now it is being transformed into a modern museum for everyone. The key question is: what does a museum need to look like today? It should be a vibrant place for stories, culture, music, film and art.

HOW THE MUSEUM TEAM WORKS

The museum team does not work alone. The most important method is: collaboration. The museum was planned together with the people of Höchst. Together, they have created a place where questions are asked and the past is explored. Another question is also raised: what does history have to do with life today? Visitors are encouraged to have their say and to help develop the exhibition further alongside the museum.

WHO THE MUSEUM WORKS WITH

The Bolongaro Museum is part of a large network. It collaborates with many partners:

With associations:

With the Höchst Society for History and Antiquities and the Cultural and Museum Society Bolongaro.

With residents:

Through the CityLab Bolongaro, exhibitions are planned directly with people from the district. The goal is to reach more and more people.

With neighbours in the Bolongaro Palace:

The museum shares the palace with a music school, a cinema, a daycare centre and a youth centre. Together, they bring the palace to life — inside and in the garden.

WHAT THE MUSEUM SHOWS

These major themes are presented: the valuable porcelain and the history and present of Höchst. A particularly large number of people with different backgrounds and stories live in Frankfurt's West. The museum reflects this diversity. Difficult topics are also addressed: environmental issues, poverty and exclusion, for example. Understanding the past allows us to question the present. Some topics are not yet covered in the museum. They are to be added gradually over time.

WHERE THE MUSEUM IS HEADED

The museum aims to be an open place, accessible to many different groups of people. People should feel welcome to spend time there and exchange ideas. The museum wants to be a space that people can use in different ways.

The museum wants to keep developing.

Together with its visitors and with the people of Frankfurt's West. The goal is to give people the confidence to help shape the future of their own district.

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

During the exhibition “Höchst Tells Its Story!” we are asking:
What interests visitors?
What is missing?
What do you hope to see in the new museum?
How should topics be presented in the new museum?
There is a questionnaire for this purpose.

You can find the questionnaire by scanning the QR code.
Your answers will help us make the new museum better and more engaging.
Thank you for your feedback!



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**HÖCHST TELLS ITS STORY! ABOUT THE MUSEUM IN
BOLONGARO PALACE**
A CityLab exhibition by the Historical Museum Frankfurt
June 9, 2026 to February 28, 2027



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