



LEATHER.WORLD.HISTORY. 100 YEARS OF THE GERMAN LEATHER MUSEUM (1917–2017)

Since September 16, 2017

On the occasion of its 100th anniversary the German Leather Museum (DLM) presents **LEATHER.WORLD.HISTORY.**, the second exhibition in its centenary year, 2017.

In 1917 the architect Hugo Eberhardt, then director of the Technische Lehranstalten (Technical Teaching Institutes, later the Werkkunstschule and today State University HfG Offenbach), founded the museum in the flourishing city of leather and leather goods Offenbach/Main. It was to be an exemplary collection for the training of young designers, craft workers and leather goods manufacturers. Today the collection encompasses more than 30,000 objects from all cultures and epochs, making the German Leather Museum the world's only institution to collect and present exclusively everything to do with the material leather and related materials.

A museum in transformation

In our centenary year we are presenting two deliberately contrasting exhibitions intended to draw attention to the museum's broad spectrum. They invite visitors to rediscover the diversity of the material leather and the special quality of the exhibits.

The interactive installation *Linking Leather – The Diversity of Leather*, which we opened in March 2017, revolved around the fascinating material of leather. Short texts provided visitors with information about the various kinds of leather and tanning methods. In addition, various types of leather were presented on a “touching table” for visitors to touch and feel.

In the exhibition **LEATHER.WORLD.HISTORY.** the focus is on the outstanding exhibits in the collection. Here we continue the path we have begun, which envisages lateral thinking across

all three areas of the collection – applied arts, ethnology and the German Shoe Museum – whatever the ethnic group or epoch.

Both exhibitions reveal the form the museum's reorientation is to take and how we envisage the future to be. This also includes recombining and reinterpreting the various areas of the collection in ever new ways in our presentations, in order to illustrate, using the cultural history of leather, human history on a global scale. Historian Dr. Inez Florschütz, who has been Director of the museum since November 2014, is responsible for this new concept.

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In four overarching thematic groups – *Offenbach/Main – City of Leather*, *Living with Leather*, *Leather makes History* and *Leather opens up new Worlds* – the exhibition presents an exemplary cross-section with over 130 objects. The pieces come both from the permanent collection and from the museum's various storerooms. They were selected based on their historical or artistic significance, as well as on their ability to tell stories from different ages and countries. The exhibits were carefully and specially prepared for the exhibition in the museum's restoration studio and photographed for the publication. Across an area measuring some 600 square meters, the German Leather Museum presents a completely new exhibition setup with a specially developed form of presentation.

LEATHER.WORLD.HISTORY. puts the emphasis on fascinating dialogs and cross-references between the pieces, creating pairs or groupings, and as such highlights both links and contrasts.

The exhibition kicks off with two opposite pairs of objects that create a link right across the 100-year history of the German Leather Museum's collecting activities: The first purchase by museum founder Hugo Eberhardt in 1912, a 16th-century Tyrolean chest, meets the museum's most recent purchase, a leather-covered bast-fiber toy from 1970 made in the former East Germany. The oldest exhibit in the collection, an Egyptian rawhide vessel, is presented alongside one of the newest acquisitions, high-quality, leather-covered headphones.

In addition, the exhibition provides insights into the history of the museum and its collection. An empty display case, for example, in which for many years shrunken heads of

indigenous peoples were displayed, refers to the current debate on the correct approach to these human artefacts.

A catalog on the exhibition has been published by Kerber Verlag with 276 pages, over 100 color images and numerous archive photographs, ed. by Inez Florschütz, with essays by Vanessa Didion, Inez Florschütz, Andreas Hansert, Kirsten Pick and Maria Anna Tappeiner. Price € 34

We would like to thank our sponsors and supporters

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Tuesday to Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Weekends and public Holidays 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Every second Thursday of the month 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.



From Frankfurt main station: LRT lines S1, S2, S8, S9
to station "Ledermuseum", exit
Ludwigstrasse (approx. 10-minute walk)

Pressekontakt

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Goldie, a contemporary artistic work by William Metin Martin, will be simultaneously presented in the foyer of the German Leather Museum:

Prior to studying at Kunsthochschule Mainz (Mainz Art Academy), William Metin Martin (b. 1995, Giessen) studied textile technology and clothing at Modeschule Gießen (Giessen Fashion School). His oversized sewn bag is based on the famous ladies' handbag *Birkin bag* by Hermès. Yet he counteracts the exclusivity of luxury in his works by using simple materials such as paint substrate. The bag *Goldie* is made from Piñatex™ Oro, an innovative and sustainable non-woven fabric made of pineapple fibers, which is occasionally used as imitation leather.