

PRESS RELEASE

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Discussions at the Humboldt Forum: four new event series beginning in April

Beginning on 15 April, four new discussion series will address the core themes of the Humboldt Forum: Colonialism and Coloniality; the Humboldt Brothers; and the History and Architecture of the Site. Initially in digital format due to pandemic restrictions, the discussions will also in the future take place in hybrid format in front of a live audience.

What challenges and opportunities lie ahead for ethnological museums addressing their colonial heritage? How can cultural sites be successfully inclusive? And what link exists between top researchers and the Humboldt brothers? From mid-April, the Humboldt Forum will be hosting four discussion and lecture event series, and invites interested viewers to participate. Taking place on Thursdays, they will address the central themes of the Humboldt Forum with guests from both Germany and further afield -- initially in digital format due to pandemic restrictions, but also in the future in hybrid format in front of a live audience. The focus of the discussions will be: Colonialism and Coloniality; the Humboldt Brothers; and the History and Architecture of the site.

99 Questions looks at colonial collections in museums from a global perspective. The opening event is entitled: [*Status Quo: Colonial collections in European Museums*](#) on 15 April. What is the position of museums today? What are the current approaches to addressing a burdened history? What effect do guidelines have? And how do we arrive at a new definition of 'museum'? A conversation moderated by Prasanna Oommen with Emmanuel Kasarhérou (Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Paris), Wiebke Ahrndt (Übersee-Museum Bremen), Lars-Christian Koch (Ethnologisches und Asiatisches Museum Berlin) and El Hadji Malick Ndiaye (Musée Théodore Monod d'Art Africain, Dakar).

99 Questions is a year-long series of conversations at the Humboldt Forum. In various dialogues, pressing questions on how to deal with the history of colonial collections will be explored and possibilities for a common future in museums and civil society will be sought. Curated by Michael Dieminger in collaboration with the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Site Specifics takes the multi-faceted history, past and present, of the site as the inspiration for its themes. The first event (in German language) takes place in conjunction with the Humboldt Forum's first inclusive publication [*From Monastery to Humboldt Forum. 700 Years of History and Architecture. A multi-sensory book*](#)

On 22 April, Jürgen Dusel, Federal Government Commissioner for Matters Relating to Persons with Disabilities, in conversation with consultant Friedrun Portele-Anyangbe, discusses inclusion generally in cultural and museum environments, and specifically at the Humboldt Forum. Guests also include Katja Gimpel (Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss), and Christine Rieger (member of Arbeitskreis Kultur und Freizeit im Allgemeinen Blinden- und Sehbehindertenverein Berlin gegr. 1874 e.V.). With music by Jonas Hauer & Ariane Jeßulat and presented by Shary Reeves. A set of 3D tactile pictures from the book is available, and can be posted in advance to interested participants on request. Please register for these by calling +49-30 99 211 89 89 by 15 April at the latest. German Sign Language interpretation, simplified language and German live subtitles will all be an integral part of this On-site Insight.

Site Specifics series curated by Andrea Rieder.

WeSearch will introduce each of the seven clusters of excellence at Berlin's universities. The first event will take place on 29 April: [*Can bacteria spin a yarn? We need a new culture of materials*](#). Christiane Sauer (weißensee kunsthochschule berlin), Peter Fratzl (Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces in Potsdam), Claudia Mareis (Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst FHNW in Basel), Wolfgang Schäffner (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), along with other researchers, discuss the current ecological crisis, and its requisite rethinking of the relationship between technology and nature. Moderated by Volker Wieprecht.

The *WeSearch* series is curated by Uta Kornmeier in collaboration with the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Counterquestions sets the Humboldt Forum in the context of our current times.

The first event will take place on 6 May: [*Caught out again? 'Black swans', walls and pandemics – what do we learn when dealing with the unexpected?*](#)

Participants will be announced at short notice.

These series of talks and lectures aim to shed light on academic discourse, with reference to current socio-political issues, and place the Humboldt Forum in the context of collections and coloniality, science and current affairs. The Forum offers its guests and audience a platform for dialogue, to question culture, society, science and politics. Over the course of several weeks, this will create a new, dynamic resource on the Humboldt Forum's website and YouTube channel.

More detailed information on the individual discussion series and dates can be found at:
www.humboldtforum.org/programm

One building, four partners: The diverse range of voices is founded on the collaboration of our partner institutions. The Humboldt Forum is a collaboration between the Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss; the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz for collections from the Ethnologisches Museum and the Museum für Asiatische Kunst of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for the Humboldt Lab; and Kulturprojekte Berlin with the Stadtmuseum Berlin for the Berlin exhibition.

Dependent on the pandemic situation easing, the Schlüterhof and the Passage in the Humboldt Forum, as well as the exhibitions on the ground floor and first floor, are expected to open in spring. (*History of the Site*, *Have a Seat! An Exhibition for Children*, *BERLIN GLOBAL* and *After Nature*). The second and third floors of the west wing will follow in late summer 2021, along with the Ethnologisches Museum, the Asiatisches Museum and the roof terrace. Finally, the entire building will be open to visitors around New Year 2022.

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