

Exhibiting the Holocaust 1945–2025 (Berlin, 13–14 Nov 25)

Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Nov 13–14, 2025

Deadline: Jun 30, 2025

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EXHIBITING THE HOLOCAUST 1945–2025: GENEALOGIES AND LEGACIES

The first exhibitions on the Holocaust were organized in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. These were mostly created by survivors, either individually or through newly established institutions such as historical commissions, which were active in many DP camps and across Europe. These early exhibitions presented materials gathered to document the persecution and genocide of Jews in Europe. This unprecedented effort laid the groundwork for the establishment of memorials and museums in later decades and shaped the display strategies of future exhibitions.

This conference seeks to look back and historicize the practice of Holocaust exhibitions from 1945 to the present, reflecting on different strategies, genealogies, and legacies.

Of special interest are exhibitions organized before the so-called “memory boom” as analysed by Andreas Huyssen at the end of the 20th century, especially those staged during the politicized and divisive Cold War period, which are only now gaining broader scholarly recognition. The relationship between exhibitions and institutions such as memorials and museums is also central to this discussion—not only in terms of methodology, but also regarding the politics of display.

In recognizing the long history of Holocaust exhibition-making, the conference also aims to address methodological questions: How can such exhibitions be studied? How can analysis of representational modes be combined with attention to the social and political contexts of exhibition making? What is the intersection between exhibition histories and museum studies?

Finally, the conference seeks to consider the legacies of Holocaust exhibitions and discuss how these practices influenced the way other atrocities and genocides are exhibited.

We invite proposals for 20-minute presentations addressing topics including (but not limited to):

- Early survivor-led Holocaust exhibitions;
- Holocaust exhibitions during the Cold War;
- Display strategies and their long-term impact;
- The role of specific media, such as photography and film;
- Holocaust exhibitions and museums, or memorials’
- Infrastructures of Holocaust exhibitions;
- Strategies of representation;
- Acts of display during commemorative ceremonies (e.g. display of urns);
- The impact of Holocaust exhibitions on other memory cultures and commemorative practices.

Travel and accommodation expenses will be reimbursed in full or partially, dependent on final selection.

Please send an abstract (max. 300 words) of your proposed 20-minute presentation, along with a short biographical note (max. 100 words), by 30 June 2025 to a.pietrasik@fu-berlin.de. Notification of acceptance will be sent by 15 July 2025.

The conference is supported by the Alfred Landecker Foundation.

Reference:

CFP: Exhibiting the Holocaust 1945-2025 (Berlin, 13-14 Nov 25). In: ArtHist.net, May 7, 2025 (accessed Aug 12, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/49190>>.