

HEIDI HORTEN COLLECTION

FAQ

About the Museum:

General info

Q: How big is the Heidi Horten Collection museum?

A: The museum has 1,500 m² of total exhibition space and a small, publicly accessible sculpture park of around 500 m².

Q: What makes the museum special?

The Heidi Horten Collection is a museum that also reflects the extraordinary character of the collection through its architecture: the historic façade of the former archduke chancellery building forms a classic framework for a modern, contemporary interior. This interplay of old and new is reflected not least in the materials used: for example, cold steel meets historicist terrazzo flooring. Another unique feature lies in the collection itself. No other Austrian institution can come close to the broad spectrum of top international artists from which the collection has developed: Modern art icons complemented and enriched by commissioned works from contemporary artists – a notion extended to the exhibition program. The uniqueness of the Heidi Horten Collection is also characterized by an expanded, interdisciplinary concept of art that ranges from applied arts to fine art. Going forward, all of these works, which were collected out of private interest, deserve a place in the art-historical canon.

In the middle of Vienna's cultural center, between the State Opera and the Albertina, the collection's permanent visibility in a publicly accessible museum is a win for anyone who wants to trace the development of art.

Q: How many artworks will be on display?

A: The number of works shown will change depending on the exhibition. The focus of the debut exhibition in the summer of 2022 will be the museum's architecture, which will be adorned with light sculptures and other exemplary works from the collection.

Q: How much will admission cost?

A: The admission prices take their cue from other national and international institutions. The regular admission price is 15 euros, with reduced pricing for seniors, students, military, and civil servants. Adults with special needs can enjoy complimentary access to the museum, as can anyone under 19. Art education for children and young people is a top priority for the museum, so admission will also be free for those accompanying school groups. This is a novelty in Vienna's museum sector. On Thursday evenings, entry is free for everyone from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Q: What is planned for the museum's front courtyard?

A: The front courtyard is designed as a sculpture garden and should be freely accessible to everyone as a place of contemplation.

Q: Who will run the museum?

A: Dr. Agnes Husslein-Arco is the director of the museum.

Q: Will Dr. Husslein-Arco also curate the exhibitions?

A: The exhibitions will be planned and implemented by Dr. Agnes Husslein-Arco in collaboration with a curatorial team.

Exhibitions

Q: Will the museum have a permanent exhibition, or will there be temporary exhibitions?

A: The museum will house temporary exhibitions, including solo shows featuring contemporary artists represented in the collection.

Q: What thematic concepts are exhibitions planned around?

A: Content-related questions will be developed from themes inherent to the collection holdings themselves and will conceptualize the collection in its historical range.

Q: Will there also be collaborations with other collections?

A: Collaborations with other collections could be considered.

Q: How often will the exhibitions change?

A: There will most likely be two to three exhibitions per year.

Q: Will the same works be exhibited that were seen at the “WOW!” exhibition at the Leopold Museum?

A: Those artworks will be on view as long as they fit thematically and contextually into new exhibitions.

Development, financing, and construction

Q: What was the motivation for Heidi Goëss-Horten to build a museum for her collection?

A: In 2018, Heidi Goëss-Horten presented a body of selected works from her art collection for the exhibition “WOW! The Heidi Horten Collection” at the Leopold Museum, giving the general public an insight into her collection activities for the first time. The overwhelming response to the exhibition instilled in her the desire to permanently make the art collection accessible to all interested parties and preserve it for future generations. With this museum, Heidi Goëss-Horten invites visitors to enjoy art in a new way and participate in her extraordinary collection. It should also be mentioned here that, in contrast to other private collections, the Heidi Horten Collection is financed exclusively from its own resources.

Q: How was the architecture firm chosen?

A: Three renowned architectural firms – Ortner & Ortner, Kuehn Malvezzi, and the next ENTERprise Architects – were invited in competition. The next ENTERprise Architects’ design swayed Heidi Goëss-Horten because it gave the Hanuschhof an atmosphere that both respects the history of the building and reflects the needs of a future-oriented museum. The architects are known for their expertise in the art sector. What made them stand out was their visionary design for a museum building in which history and the present can coexist.

Q: What were the criteria for choosing the Hanuschhof location?

A: The top priority was to choose a central location. The Hanuschhof situates the museum close to other important cultural institutions in the city. Heidi Goëss-Horten chose Vienna because it is her birthplace.

Q: What did the renovations cost?

A: The museum is purely privately financed. We therefore ask for your understanding that we do not provide this information.

Q: What is the annual budget for the museum? How is the Heidi Horten Collection financed?

A: Unlike other private collections, the Heidi Horten Collection is financed entirely through its own resources, without any public subsidies. We therefore ask for your understanding that we do not provide any information on this.

Q: Who bought the Stöckl building?

A: This is a private matter for Heidi Goëss-Horten. We ask your understanding that no information is provided on this.

About the Collection:

Provenance

Especially in recent years, provenance research has become increasingly crucial in museum endeavors. Museums worldwide often work for decades to fully process the provenance of the works in their collections. This topic, of course, is also of great importance to Heidi Goëss-Horten as the museum founder and Agnes Husslein-Arco as the museum director. For this reason, the last few years have been spent to investigate the provenances of many works in the collection. It is a laborious and complex job, requiring a lengthy process that has not yet been completed for all works. The Heidi Horten Collection’s research team works with a network of internationally active experts and with the archives of the respective artists.

Q: Has there already been a restitution case or a possible dispute?

A: No.

Q: How would Heidi Goëss-Horten handle a case in which the provenance is unclear?

A: The Art Restitution Act of 1998 stipulates that confiscated art objects that came into the federal government's possession in the course of or as a result of Nazi tyranny are to be returned to the original owners or their legal successors. In order to rule out such cases, the museum's founder has initiated provenance research in relation to her collection, and of course decisions are made against the background of this law.

Procurement and plans for the future

Q: Are works still being acquired for the collection?

A: Art has always been a subject close to Heidi Goëss-Horten's heart, one that she continues to pursue with passion. To this day, she builds her collection with works adding cohesive depth to the whole.

Q: What will happen to the collection and assets after Heidi Goëss-Horten's death?

A: The goal is to preserve the art collection long-term and make it accessible to anyone interested at the new private museum. The operation and maintenance of the museum are secured for the long term.

Q: What initially informed Helmut Horten's ethic as a collector, and how did Heidi Goëss-Horten expand the collection?

A: The development of Heidi Goëss-Horten's private collection began after Helmut Horten's death in the 1990s. In the 1960s and 1970s, Helmut Horten acquired a few early works by Pablo Picasso, Emil Nolde, and Marc Chagall for his residence.

Heidi Goëss-Horten initially bid at auctions on her own initiative. Still, she soon sought professional advice from Agnes Husslein-Arco and was thus able to create one of the most important private collections in Europe of the past 35 years.

Heidi Goëss-Horten has demonstrated entrepreneurial acumen by investing in art that has experienced significant appreciation. The art collection in its current form is due primarily to the collecting activities and the associated intuition and skill of the collector, Heidi Goëss-Horten. As previously mentioned, only a few works were acquired by Helmut Horten himself.

Q: Have works from the collection already been shown to the public?

A: In 2018, around 170 highlights from the collection were presented in the exhibition "WOW! The Heidi Horten Collection" at the Leopold Museum in Vienna. The exhibition attracted art lovers from all over the world. A few works had previously been shown in important national and international exhibitions. Heidi Goëss-Horten would like to continue making parts of her collection available for exhibitions at other institutions.

Q: How strong is the influence of Dr. Husslein-Arco on the museum and its collection?

A: Heidi Goëss-Horten has continuously built up her collection over the past three decades. Agnes Husslein-Arco has stood by Heidi Goëss-Horten in an advisory capacity throughout this time and to the present day. The decision to purchase lies exclusively with Heidi Goëss-Horten.

Q: How many works does Heidi Goëss-Horten's art collection contain?

A: Several hundred works.

About Heidi Goëss-Horten's Net Worth:

Q: Does Heidi Goëss-Horten support charitable organizations? Does she support those with a Jewish connection?

A: Heidi Goëss-Horten supports numerous charitable initiatives. When choosing, the decisive factor for Heidi Goëss-Horten has always been that she can identify with the project and that it makes a valuable contribution to society. A religious orientation, in whatever form, has never been a reason for or against a donation on her part.

About the Historian's Report:

Q: How does the Heidi Horten Collection deal with the story of Helmut Horten?

A: The Helmut Horten Foundation and Heidi Goëss-Horten were concerned with the academic analysis of Helmut Horten's entrepreneurial activities during the Second World War. Therefore, Heidi Goëss-Horten hired the renowned historian Prof. Dr. Peter Hoeres (University of Würzburg) and commissioned him with an academic report on the development of Helmut Horten's wealth and business under "Aryanization" during the "Third Reich." The academic analysis by Prof. Dr. Hoeres followed the primacy of scholarship. The results show a differentiated picture of the entrepreneur Helmut Horten and correct some rumors. The museum makes the study accessible to the public and is concerned about transparency.

Q: Who was entrusted with preparing the report, and with what level of expertise?

A: The historian Prof. Dr. Peter Hoeres was entrusted with it. He is a professor of Modern History at the Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg. Among other topics, Prof. Dr. Hoeres has dealt with the history of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) and published an account of this newspaper in September 2019. He is currently working on a global reappraisal of past dictatorships, with a particular focus on reappraisals of the dictatorial reigns of Franco and Salazar. He is a member of the Historical Commission of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences. He has repeatedly commented on coming to terms with Germany's Nazi past in many comments and articles.

Q: What does this report say?

A: The report examines Helmut Horten's wealth accumulation from 1936 to 1945. The academic analysis by Prof. Dr. Hoeres followed the primacy of scholarship. The results show a differentiated picture of the entrepreneur Helmut Horten and correct some rumors.

Q: What sources are/were used for this?

A: Public and private archives were examined to prepare this report.

Q: Are/were contemporary witnesses or their descendants interviewed?

A: Prof. Dr. Hoeres and his team also looked at the impressions of third parties from this period as well as made use of written statements.

Q: Why is this topic only now being addressed?

A: Indeed, Heidi Goëss-Horten has dealt with this topic before. Measures to clarify the matter have been undertaken in the past already. With the opening of the museum, Heidi Goëss-Horten has taken the opportunity for a team of experts from the University of Würzburg, led by Professor Dr. Peter Hoeres, to analyze it in a manner both professional and, above all, conclusive.