

EXHIBITION PREVIEW 2026

MUSEUM JUDENPLATZ

Everything Forgotten

Opening: 27 January 2026 at 6:30 pm

Duration: 28 January 2026 to 6 September 2026

In Hebrew, the word *lishkoach* – to forget – rhymes with the word *koach*, which can mean both power and strength. Though perhaps a coincidence, this lexical affinity points to the dual nature of forgetting. The exhibition "Everything Forgotten" examines both the power and the powerlessness of forgetting from a cultural history perspective and enquires whether forgetting only relates to loss or whether it can also be liberating.

The power of forgetting is used in different ways and leaves those who are forgotten powerless. Within Jewish communities, excommunication (*cherem*) is the most severe rabbinical sanction. It is meant not only to exclude the person concerned but also to extinguish all memory of them. External enemies can also be consigned to oblivion. The curse *yimach shemo* (may his name be erased) is reserved for individual enemies of the Jewish people.

Nazi extermination policy aimed not only to murder the Jewish population but also to destroy proof of the mass murder. When the concentration and extermination camps were liberated, the only evidence to survive was the material that the Nazis had not been able to destroy. And after 1945, many Austrians wanted to forget the past and their part in it. This "culture of forgetting" did not change until the Waldheim affair in 1986.

At a time when historical responsibility and memory are being increasingly questioned, it is important to talk about the mechanisms of forgetting and to ask what it is being suppressed and overwritten, overlooked, or deliberately erased.

The exhibition invites visitors to consider forgetting not just as the opposite of remembering but as a part of a complex confrontation with the past and the present.

Participating artists: Arnold Dreyblatt, Dani Gal, Esther Hovers, Brigitte Kowanz, Maya Schweizer, Sigrid Sigurdsson, William Utermohlen, Patrick Zachmann.

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"Everything Forgotten" was created in cooperation with the Jewish Museum Hohenems and will be shown there from 8 November 2026 to 18 April 2027.

Curators: Daniela Pscheiden (JMW), Dinah Ehrenfreund-Michler (JMH)

Design: Fuhrer, Vienna

MUSEUM DOROTHEERGASSE

A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew

Eran Shakine

Opening: 19 May 2026 at 6:30 pm

Duration: 20 May to 8 November 2026

The Israeli artist Eran Shakine (born 1962) titles each one of his pictures as "A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew..." – almost as though he were aiming to tell a joke. His large-format works engage humorously with the question of similarities and differences between the three monotheistic world religions.

The headline of a (fictional) cover of Time Magazine declares: "Mother gives birth to identical triplets: a Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew." The three men, mostly wearing top hats and black suits, move through the world: On the lookout for common origins, God's love, and a dialogue with Moses, they experience various commonplace as well as bizarre situations, each of which leads them to a lesser or greater insight. As innocuous as the paintings and drawings seem, their message is serious: Despite their different interpretations of scripture, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism share a common history. Their wishes, dreams, and hopes are ultimately very similar.

Shakine's oil crayon pictures are essentially anti-caricatures: They challenge stereotypes and shift the focus onto commonalities: humanity, curiosity, doubt, hope, and faith. His works are easily accessible, but equally of complete philosophical depth. With a fine sense of humor and poetic clarity, Shakine invites his audience to recognize what unites them and to celebrate their humanity in equality.

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Eran Shakine paints, draws, sculpts, and also creates public artworks. He was born in Israel in 1962 to French and Hungarian Shoah survivors. He lives and works in Tel Aviv. His work has been exhibited internationally and is included in numerous collections.

Curators: Barbara Staudinger, Hannes Sulzenbacher

Design: Vandasye

MUSEUM JUDENPLATZ

NO WAY HOME

Viennese Jews in Exile

Opening: 22 September 2026

Duration: 23 September 2026 to 4 April 2027

Following the Anschluss on 12 March 1938, Vienna became a model city for the systematic expulsion of Jews. Within a very brief period, Europe's third-largest Jewish community was practically extinguished through emigration, deportation, and murder. For those who managed to flee abroad, this meant the loss of their middle-class livelihood, their property, and their home. Viennese Jews found places of refuge all over the world – in European states, North and South America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Australia – and had to painstakingly rebuild their lives in foreign lands.

The loss of home was a heavy burden for the expelled individuals. Without linguistic skills, professional options, and social contacts, they found it difficult to gain a foothold in exile. Due to further persecution, arrest, or expulsion from their initial countries of refuge, some were even forced to flee multiple times before they found a safe haven. Life in exile was anything but simple or peaceful.

Most never returned to Vienna. The city that had expelled them was no longer their home. The exhibition tells the life stories of these Viennese Jews and thereby highlights the multifaceted dimensions of loss of home and exile.

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Curator: Caitlin Gura

MUSEUM DOROTHEERGASSE

The Orientalists

Jewish Researchers and Adventurers Searching for Themselves in Foreign Lands

Opening: 24 November 2026 at 6:30 pm

Duration: 25 November 2026 to 9 May 2027

The exhibition "The Orientalists" addresses the emergence of Oriental studies in the nineteenth century and reveals a surprising insight: The development of Islamic studies, Arabic studies, and Oriental studies was closely connected with the Wissenschaft des Judentums movement and with emancipation and reform. Many of its protagonists were Viennese Jews, hence "the Orientalists" also form a part of Vienna's Jewish history.

These new Oriental studies were a field in which Jews could search for their own origins: Searching for and researching the sources of their own culture and history was not just a scholarly endeavor, but also an attempt to liberate themselves from the discriminatory clutches of a Christian society.

From this perspective, Islam and the Arab world were by no means enemies of Europe or an exotic "other," but a source of European culture, a fact that challenges various present-day stereotypes. Thus, "The Orientalists" undermines the foundations both of xenophobic ideas and of postcolonial black-and-white thinking.

This exhibition of the Jewish Museum Hohenems has been expanded for the Jewish Museum Vienna and augmented with numerous highlights.

Curators: Felicitas Heimann-Jelinek (Vienna), Marcus Patka (JMW)

Design: Martin Kohlbauer